Psychiatric evaluation on habitual offender sought. » PAGE 2

Asiana Airlines has new GM for Saipan. » PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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75¢

CNMI also at risk from Zika virus

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

» CHCC says mosquito bite prevention is key

The dreaded Zika virus has affected many island nations in the Pacific and poses a risk to the CNMI as well.

Cases have been reported in American Samoa, Samoa, and Tonga, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,

In the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico, a total of nine cases were recorded, only one of which is a travel-associated case. One locally acquired case was recorded for the U.S.

See ZIKA on Page 4

'Evaluation process for Cabinet members needed'

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Rep. Joseph Lee Pan T. Guerrero (R-Saipan) is suggesting that the administration should have its own evaluation process for government appointees like Cabinet secretaries and directors.

Guerrero made the suggestion after Walter Manglona was given a memorandum of a proposed termination by Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Laura Ogumoro last Friday.

Manglona

The "proposed termination" happened with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres was off-island. He is currently in Washington, D.C. to attend the meetings of the National Governors Association's meeting and the 35th U.S. Coral Reef Task Force.

The Governor's Office released this statement: "Presently Gov. [Ralph] Torres is off-island, but he has been made aware of the issue surrounding the DCCA Office on Aging. He has instructed the office to delve into the matter accordingly and prepare the findings for his review when gets back from Washington, D.C."

Guerrero said that he is hoping that the political aspect of appointments should be removed and providing better services for the community be made the No. 1 priority. He added that appointees should be asked "what have you done?" and "have

See MEMBERS on Page 4

Mixed reactions on BSI's archeological findings, interment proposal

FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
Best Sunshine International, Ltd. held the first night of their public hearing to share the findings of the archeological dig done at their site in Garapan. Photo shows some of the artifacts found on the site.

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
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REPORTER

Mixed reactions were aired at the first public hearing of Best Sunshine International, Ltd. regarding the archeological work they've done on the developer's site in Garapan where the Grand Mariana Casino and Hotel Resort will rise.

Following a presentation by Scientific Consultant Services principal investigator Michael Dega on the findings of their months-long dig, the floor was opened for the public to comment, especially on the topic on where the remains will be interred.

Saipan Young Professionals' Mable Ayuyu was among a handful of those who thanked Best Sunshine for what they have done particularly in educating the public on what they were able to find at the site. Ayuyu said education is very important.

She also thanked BSI for thinking of putting up a memorial. BSI shared their idea of having an interment and memorial site as close to the beach as possible where a cultural garden and a

See MIXED on Page 4

INSIDE

LOCAL

Ten people have died on a single small island in Fiji as the total death toll from a powerful cyclone climbed to 29.

» PAGE 14

LIFE & STYLE

The R-rated comic book adaption "Deadpool" remained on top at the box office.

» PAGE 20

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6 DAYS
CDMA SHUTDOWN
IS FEBRUARY 29
IT&E
Life In Motion

Local

Psychiatric evaluation on habitual offender sought

» **Suspect allegedly stole Judge Govendo's gun**

» **Federal prosecutor reveals defendant allegedly hearing 'Dark Angel' voices**

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The U.S. government yesterday asked the federal court to order a psychiatric or psychological examination on habitual offender Gilbert Kaipat, who is facing charges for alleged possession of a gun and ammunition that he stole from the house of Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo.

Assistant U.S. attorney Russell H. Lorfing, counsel for the U.S. government, requested the U.S. District Court for the NMI to commit Kaipat to the custody of the Office of the Attorney General for placement in a facility in order to be evaluated by a psychiatrist or psychologist who will determine whether he is presently suffering from a mental disease or defect rendering him incompetent to stand trial.

Lorfing said there is evidence suggesting that Kaipat, also known as Cling Kaipat, may have mental issues.

A status conference in Kaipat's case was set yesterday in federal court.

As officers of the court, Lorfing said, he has an obligation, where there is some evidence of possible mental issues, to call the matter to the court's attention.

The examination, the prosecutor said, may ensure that the defendant is competent to understand the nature and consequences of the proceedings against him and/or to assist counsel in his defense.

Lorfing said he is raising this issue now so that the competency may be addressed at this time, to avoid any unnecessary delays in the proceedings.

Lorfing disclosed that, on Jan. 13, 2015, the Office of the Attorney General filed a petition asking the Superior Court to involuntarily commit Kaipat.

Lorfing said in the petition, the OAG alleged that the defendant complained of hearing voices from a "Dark Angel."

OAG further alleged that Kaipat has a history of psychosis and has "strange and disruptive" behavior.

Lorfing said based on the CNMI government's representations, Kaipat was committed to a mental health institution.

It was Govendo who concluded that the defendant is mentally ill and is a danger to himself and others.

On Nov. 10, 2015, police detective Catherine B. Pangelinan testified at a preliminary hearing in the Superior Court regarding Kaipat's arrest in this case.

Lorfing said a discussion in court between a defense lawyer and detective Pangelinan suggests that Kaipat suffers from a mental illness.

Currently, Kaipat is incarcerated and under the care and custody of the CNMI.

Lorfing said he has spoken with the assistant attorney general assigned to prosecute defendant's case in local court.

Lorfing said the OAG does not oppose transferring Kaipat into federal custody for the purpose of determining competency.

The indictment charged the 19-year-old Kaipat with possession of a stolen firearm and possession of ammunition.

According to the indictment, Kaipat unlawfully possessed a 9mm Smith and Wesson pistol, "which had been shipped and transported in interstate commerce" knowing that the firearm was stolen.

Kaipat also allegedly possessed a stolen hollow point 9mm round of ammunition.

At a preliminary hearing in November 2015, Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho found probable cause to charge Kaipat with burglary, theft, and criminal mischief over the burglary at Govendo's house.

Govendo was off-island when the burglary happened.

After police identified Kaipat as the suspect through a surveillance camera, the defendant then reportedly guided investigators to a trash bin at a bakery where he hid the stolen gun. Detectives recovered the judge's police-issued 9mm pistol.

Manglona wants update on 'delayed' Rota dialysis center

Sen. Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota) is asking the head of the local hospital for updated information on Rota's dialysis center, a project the senator calls long overdue and a delay that has shifted costs to Rota patients who have to seek treatment on Saipan.

Manglona

"The Rota hemodialysis center has yet to be operable since its anticipated date on Marc 2009, several years ago," Manglona writes in a Feb. 16 letter to Esther Muna, chief executive officer of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation.

"It is important that we do not further delay this long overdue project as the government has spent almost $1.5 million in construction to have its own dialysis center for persons needing dialysis three times a week," Manglona adds.

Manglona goes on to ask for updated assessment and recommendations on the professional staff and personnel needed to operate the center, adding that a CHC nephrologist visited the facility in 2012 to make an assessment.

Manglona also pointed to the several Rota patients currently undergoing dialysis treatment at the dialysis center on Saipan. These patients, he said, have left behind their families on Rota for several years now, while carrying a financial burden.

Manglona, in closing his letter, urged that Muna's office form a working group of professionals to plan for the future of the Rota center so they can "move forward" with it. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

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IT&E would like to remind it's **RESIDENTIAL, GOVERNMENT & BUSINESS** customers that current billing of accounts are due on or before **Wednesday, February 24, 2016**. Payments not received by close of business on **February 24** will result in temporary suspension of all telephone services after 6:00PM on that day.

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PUBLIC NOTICE
AMENDMENT #01

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that a Special Board Meeting is scheduled on **Thursday, February 25, 2016 1:30 p.m. at the NMHC's Conference Room, Garapan, Saipan.** The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
a. Call to Order
b. Roll Call
c. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. NEW BUSINESS
a. Budget Call 2017

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

V. ADJOURNMENT

(Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/ EDWARD C. SABLAN
Chairman of the Board

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Asiana Airlines has new GM for Saipan

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Asiana Airlines will bid goodbye to its current general manager this week.

Park Sung-nam, who has served the region for four years, will be moving back to Seoul, South Korea as his contract as general manager of the Saipan Regional Office is ending.

"I will be transferred to another operation in Seoul. We plan to launch a new airline, Air Seoul, and I will be responsible for taking over the launching fight in Seoul," Park said.

Prior to Saipan, Park also served as general manager in Bangkok, Thailand for Asiana Airlines.

"During my stay here for four years, we went through difficult things," Park said.

He mentioned the problem that Asiana Airlines encountered in 2014 when their flights were suspended after the pilots of flight OZ603 for continuing with a passenger jet flight from Incheon to Saipan despite discovering signs of engine trouble after takeoff.

Park also took note of the challenges that they encountered after Typhoon Soudelor.

Lee Jong-Hong will be taking the place of Park, who will be leaving the island on Feb. 27.

Lee has been with Asiana for 25 years and prior to Saipan has served the Seattle area for the airline.

"I heard about the typhoon and understand the challenges," Lee said, "Now is a good moment to improve the CNMI and Asiana never forgets to play an important role in bringing more passengers to this society and contributing to the economy of the CNMI."

Park and Lee said they both strive to get more flights to service Saipan as general managers.

"We strive ourselves to get more flights here. That's the first step to go forward," Park said, "We don't know when it's going to be but Asiana is always interested in having more flights and bring more passengers to the CNMI."

Park believes Saipan is getting more and more popular in Asian countries such as Korea and China but there are improvements that have to be made especially at the airport.

"To meet the demand, there are some requirements, I think, especially the airport facilities need to be improved. Once we have the airlines arriving here at the same time, there is a cuing at the immigration which causes some inconvenience for the passengers coming here for the first time," Park said.

Park added that the waiting areas for passengers need to be more comfortable too.

Park said he learned a lot and gained many good friends on Saipan—that's why this is a "No. 1" place for him.

"Thank you for all the residents and people who supported Asiana during my stay for the last four years. The experience and friendship you showed to me and all the things that I had here will be cherished in my mind forever and it was very valuable for myself to have that much good experience in the CNMI," Park said.

FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON

Asiana Airlines will have a new general manager for Saipan. Park Sung-Nam, left, will be moving back to South Korea to manage Asiana's new lost cost carrier Air Seoul, while Lee Jong-Hong, right, will be the new general manager for the islands.

Marianas Medical Center
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Torres stresses environmental message in DC

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

Speaking to members of the 35th annual meeting of the US Coral Reef Task Force last week, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres drew some attention to the task force's involvement in getting coral species in the islands to fall under the Endangered Species Act.

The inclusion in the act has left "many challenges that have not been addressed at the federal level," Torres said.

Challenges that, if addressed, would make sure that "island economies would not be burdened with inadequate capacity to efficiently manage" the new requirements under the ESA, Torres said.

"Given the steady decline of our coral reefs, the integration of the federal-jurisdictional partnership is key to effective and efficient progress toward coral reef sustainability in our islands," Torres said in his remarks, encouraging the task force "strengthen our relationships for the benefit of our reefs and those who depend on them."

"Climate change and ocean acidification continue to be imminent threats to our coral reefs and are some of the main reasons for coral reef decline. Greenhouse gas emissions are a major driver of this phenomenon, and we need to consider possible solutions or policies to put in place," Torres added.

Torres also spoke to The Nature Conservancy in Washington, D.C. last Friday and highlighted the collaborative coral reef conservation successes from the seven-year partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and The Nature Conservancy.

Torres said he is grateful for these partnerships and looks forward to continued partnerships, referring to how Micronesian region is home to diverse marine and coastal habitats with over 1,300 fish species and over 480 coral species,

"In the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, partnership activities are conducted within the framework of the Micronesia Challenge which is a commitment to conserve at least 30 percent of near shore marine resources and 20 percent of terrestrial resources by 2020," he said.

'CUC board must settle differences'

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Senate Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications committee chair Sixto K. Igisomar (R-Saipan) is advising Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board members to finally settle their differences and work together to find solutions on the problems that continue to hound the CNMI's lone power and water provider.

Igisomar said the people are fully aware of CUC's problems with the board's disagreements within their ranks being made public.

"The people are fully aware of CUC's situation and financial status. It's a no brainer since it is not brand new problems. We know that our infrastructure is old but CUC has been trying their best to refurbish the engines and they are doing their best on what they have," said Igisomar.

"There's a lot more that's going on that we hear or read. I know the frustration of the board members. Before anything can be done, they have to settle differences."

He added that internal issues are the biggest challenge that CUC is facing right now that's why he wants the board to stop with their bickering.

"I know the issues are complicated but bickering won't provide answers. It can be easy to abolish the board, but then what? They need to agree on the message that they want to give to the public. What's happening now is confusing to the public," Igisomar said.

The first-time senator added that the CUC should look forward and prepare for the future especially when business establishments that are being constructed start their operations.

"How are we managing the current situation when it comes to power, water, and sewer services? These are issues that also need attention," added Igisomar.

He said that he and Senate Vice President Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan) would invite the CUC board along with the Division of Environmental Qualify, and the Division of Coastal Resources Management to a joint committee hearing next month to ask them a series of questions on issues that would affect the CNMI in the future.

MIXED

From Page 1

hut will also be situated.

"As far as the location, thank you for thinking of putting up a memorial," Ayuyu said.

Matt Manglona called on other members of the public to have a say on where the interment site and suggested that they vote on where the remains will be placed.

Guma' Simiyan Manaina-ta Cultural Group founder L.J. Castro also thanked BSI for reaching out to the public but asked for the remains to be treated with respect as they were taught at an early age to revere their ancestors.

"Put yourself in our ancestors' shoes, how would you like to be treated?" Castro said.

Vice speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), who was a former executive director of the Historic Preservation Office, shared to the public of the best policy that if remains had to be disturbed, they had to be placed as close to where they were found as possible. If the interment site would be different, then it has to be accessible to the public.

"This is not the first project like this," Deleon Guerrero said, pointing out that similar projects were also done for other establishments such as the DFS Galeria.

Another member of the public raised the question on what happened to the remains found in other establishments such as Hyatt Regency Saipan and Palms Resort among others.

Disrespect

Still, others raised the question of if the dig was showing disrespect to the ancestors.

Among those who voiced out this concern very blatantly was known preservationist, storyteller, and navigator, Lino Olopai.

"How dare you put my family's bones in small bags? How dare you send my family's bones for DNA testing?" Olopai said.

Olopai raised the question if there were proper rituals done before the dig and before the remains were disturbed from their resting place. Olopai argued that there are ways on how to do that and asked BSI if they were able to do so—to which BSI legal counsel Viola Alepuyu responded that they did hold rituals before the dig.

"We pray to our bones before we remove them," Olopai said.

Being of Carolinian descent, Olopai said he was angry that there was no mention of the Carolinian cultures.

"I am insulted and I am angry," Olopai said.

Olopai recognized that "we all need to move forward," however he urged for the Carolinians and Chamorros to take a stand.

Responding to questions on whether they have been culturally sensitive, Alepuyo said yes, and that they have followed and even went beyond HPO's policies and regulations.

HPO's fault

In her comments, MATUA Council for Chamoru Advancement president and founding member Liana S. Hofschneider reminded the public how they have pleaded before to have an alternate site for BSI's project because of the historical significance of the site.

However, Hofschneider said it is not BSI's fault that the site, which they urged to be included in the National Registry of Historic Places and under the protection of the National Historic Preservation Act, is now "desecrated."

Hofschneider pointed out to some members of the public and voiced out that it is HPO's fault. She called on the resignation of HPO director and state historic preservation officer Mertie Towai Kani and those in the advisory board.

"This is the most blatant, gross disrespect to show me in red dot how my ancestors are going to be buried. Shame on you guys," Hofschneider said.

She called on the public to participate in having a model on how their ancestors will be buried in at least 2,000 to 3,000 square meters of their choosing and near coastal waters.

Regarding the best location on where the site will be, "We will choose. Not Best Sunshine, not Historic [Preservation Office]," Hofschneider said, "All Chamorros will have to decide that."

Mike Fleming, principal investigator of Swift Harper Archaeological Consultant who did a dig in the late '90s on the same site which was the former Samoan Housing and Nakamoto Development property, backed Hofschneider's comments against HPO saying that "our own government has failed the people" in protecting the cultural artifacts and sites.

Fleming brought copies of a letter that he said was "proof" of the government's failure and handed it out to BSI representatives to distribute to the public.

The letter, however, was not distributed and members of the media were not allowed to view it. Alepuyo said they would need to provide it first to HPO before sharing it to the public.

Richard Hofschneider suggested for the remains to be "put right in the middle" closest to where it was found and have BSI redesign the project that they currently have.

ZIKA

From Page 1

Virgin Islands.

"The fact that it has affected other Pacific nations, the CNMI is also at risk," Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muna said.

According to Muna, they are monitoring all points of services.

"We are closely monitoring all points of services while providing most updated guidance to our medical providers, especially in the treatment of the symptoms of Zika," Muna said.

CHCC advises those who are travelling in areas that are affected by the virus to follow steps to prevent mosquito bites. Likewise, Commonwealth residents should also prevent getting bitten.

"CNMI residents should also prevent mosquito bites by protecting themselves with mosquito repellents and removing mosquito habitats such as stagnant water," Muna said.

"There is currently no vaccine to prevent or specific medicine to treat Zika infections," she added.

Muna pointed out that the disease is usually mild with fever, rash, joint pain, or conjunctivitis (red eyes) as the most common symptoms of the virus. Other common symptoms include muscle pain and headache.

"The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week," Muna said.

CHCC said it will work with the CDC to confirm if a person is affected by Zika.

If Zika is confirmed, the patient will need to get plenty of rest, drink fluids to prevent dehydration, and take medicines such as acetaminophen.

However, as other health experts have warned, Muna reminds the public not to take aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.

"If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your healthcare provider before taking additional medication," Muna said.

MEMBERS

From Page 1

you improved the services?" as some of the questions for their evaluation.

"The administration should have an evaluation process for Cabinet secretaries. We need to understand that we must discontinue this practice of changing people with every change of administration. All Cabinet members should sit down and be evaluated," said Guerrero.

He added that he hopes that Manglona's apparent firing has also nothing to do with politics but rather part of DCCA's plan to improve its services to the community. However, he has not heard any bad word on how Manglona works at the Aging Office with the staff and *man'amko* all siding with him.

"From what I've heard, Walter is more accommodating with the *man'amko*. He knows what services they need. I also met with Walter and the guy knows what he's doing and he has great work ethic. That's why I don't know why the administration went with that direction," Guerrero said.

"With due respect, I don't know where they [administration] are going. I want to hear from both sides on what's the issue with Walter. I hope the administration would reconsider their decision," Guerrero added.

Guerrero said that he is hoping that Manglona's replacement would continue his programs and not make any changes. "Do not make it more stressful for our *man'amko*. Most of the *man'amko* are under medication and they don't need stress. We need to make their lives easier, not stressful."

He said that he was disappointed when he heard the news of Manglona's firing as he learned the news while he's in the Philippines when he accompanied his wife for a medical check up.

Obama Zika plan includes insular Medicaid relief

WASHINGTON, D.C.— President Barack Obama has proposed $1.9 billion in emergency spending to deal with the spread of the Zika virus, including improvements in the Medicaid program in the U.S. insular areas.

The President sent his proposal in a letter to Speaker of the House Paul Ryan on Monday. The Zika virus is transmitted by mosquito bite and cases have already been reported in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and American Samoa. Infection of pregnant women has been associated with microcephaly, a birth defect.

"We should be grateful we have not yet seen a case of Zika in the Northern Mariana Islands," said Delegate Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan (Ind-MP). "But clearly tropical areas of the United States, such as our islands, are on the front line of risk.

"I thank the President for taking steps now to stop the spread of this disease and help keep the Marianas safe.

"I will certainly be supporting his proposal."

Among the President's recommendations to Congress is $246 million to cover the cost of increasing the federal share of Medicaid in the insular areas. Currently, the federal government pays 55 percent of the cost of this health insurance program for low-income people. The President's Zika proposal lifts the federal share to 65 percent for one year.

Although the total amount of federal spending for Medicaid in the insular areas is capped, the extra federal share the President proposes would not count against the capped amount. The $246 million would be additional, new money.

The President also wants $828 million for the Centers for Disease Control to prevent, detect, and respond to the Zika virus and other emerging infectious diseases. The $225 million would be specifically set aside for grants and technical assistance to the insular areas, where the Aedes aegypti mosquitoes that carry the virus are known to occur. CDC would also support active surveillance for Zika virus infections in pregnant women. ***(Office of the CNMI Delegate)***

Teenager in rape case pleads guilty

George Norris Langu Jr., a 19-year-old accused of breaking into a house and raping his 16-year-old neighbor on Saipan last September, entered a guilty plea yesterday in the Superior Court.

Langu signed a plea agreement with the government and pleaded guilty to sexual assault in the first degree.

Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio accepted the plea deal and Langu's guilty plea.

Kim-Tenorio set the sentencing for March 8, 2016 at 9am.

Assistant public defender Matthew Meyer is counsel for Langu.

Assistant attorney general Barbara Cepeda appeared for the government.

Aside from sexual assault in the first degree, the Office of the Attorney General charged the defendant with burglary, assault and battery, disturbing the peace, and criminal mischief.

Two police officers responded last Sept. 1 at 3:57am to a call about a sexual assault incident in Chalan Kanoa.

The alleged victim told police that she was asleep inside her room when a man sexually assaulted her. The girl said she struggled, prompting the suspect she later recognized as Langu, to run outside the house. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Frink, law firm allowed to withdraw as counsel for Dynasty

The federal court has granted attorney Sean Frink and his law firm permission to withdraw as counsel for the owners of Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino in connection with a lawsuit filed by over 500 current and former foreign workers.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona on Monday said for "good cause appearing" the Marianas Legal Strategy Group LLC's motion to withdraw from representation of Hong Kong Entertainment (Overseas) Investments Ltd. and Mega Stars is granted.

Manglona said Frink, attorney Catherine J. Cachero, and MLSG filed a motion for leave to withdraw effective immediately from representation of HKE and Mega Stars in this matter.

Citing irreconcilable differences, Frink, Cachero, and MLSG moved to withdraw as counsel for HKE and Mega Stars.

Frink

Frink disclosed that HKE and Mega Stars have failed to substantially fulfill an obligation to MLSG regarding the law firm's services.

Frink said MLSG has given reasonable warning to HKE and Mega Stars that it will withdraw unless the obligation is fulfilled.

The workers, through counsel Samuel Mok, sued HKE and Mega Stars for allegedly lying to them about their immigration legal status.

The workers alleged that the owners and management of Tinian Dynasty lied that they were legally authorized to work notwithstanding the denial of their CNMI-only Transitional Worker (CW-1) petitions.

Last October, due to delayed service of process, Manglona dismissed the lawsuit without prejudice.

Dismissal without prejudice means the workers can re-file the case.

The workers then re-filed the lawsuit. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Procurement, Delivery, Installation and Commissioning of Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Compressor with Built-In Refilling Station for the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting Departments at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Tinian International Airport and the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport

Project No. CPA-SA-005-16

The Commonwealth Ports Authority is soliciting sealed proposals from qualified companies to procure, deliver, install and commission a brand new self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) compressor with built-in refilling stations for the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Departments at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, the Tinian International Airport and the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. Proposals are to include procurement, delivery and installation of stations to each respective airport.

The compressor and refilling equipment shall include the quantities and details and product specifications as provided within the scope of work. The scope and product data are available for pick up at the CPA Administration Office.

The proposals shall include the following:

1. Letter of interest;
2. Team Members;
3. Related past project performance (include commendations or certifications, if available);
4. Available resources to accomplish the project;
5. Cost proposal (in itemized SOW format); and
6. Valid Business License.

The contract period for procurement and installation will be based on the contractor's proposal. However, liquidated damages of $500.00 shall be assessed the contractor for each calendar day the completion of the project is delayed beyond the acceptance date without approved excuse by CPA.

All proposals are to be submitted in a sealed envelope marked with the respective RFP description to the office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, 2nd floor of the Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, no later than **4:30 p.m., MONDAY, MARCH 21 , 2016.**

Each proposal shall be accompanied by a bid bond issued by a CPA approved surety company, a certified check, or a cashier's check in the amount no less than ten percent (10%) of the total proposal amount. Checks shall be made payable to the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

All responses to this RFP shall take into account any and all taxes that will be charged to the proposer awarded the contract for the project, including excise tax.

The procurement is being financed by funds from the Commonwealth Ports Authority. The contract award, if it is to be made, will be made within sixty (60) calendar days from the receipt of proposals. CPA reserves the right to hold the contract award for ninety (90) calendar days from the date of receipt of proposals.

All This procurement is made in accordance with the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations Section 40-50-225. Proposals will be evaluated and scored based on the following criteria:

1.	Total cost for equipment procurement, delivery and programming	35%
2.	Experience of the firm on similar or related systems	35%
3.	Qualifications of the principal(s) and assigned staff	20%
4.	Timeframe for delivery, programming and commissioning	10%

Questions and inquiries regarding this Request for Proposals shall be submitted in writing and may be delivered to the Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Ports Authority, at the Saipan International Airport, faxed to (670) 234-5962 or emailed to Assistant ARFF Chief William Camacho at bcamacho@cpa.gov.mp.

CPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted for: (a) any of the reasons set forth in this Request for Proposals; or (b) any of the reasons set forth in the CPA Procurement Rules and Regulations regarding bid rejection or cancellation; or (c) sufficient justification exists that awarding the project contract would not be in the best interest of CPA. CPA further reserves the right to waive any defects in said proposals if in its sole opinion to do so would be in CPA's best interest.

All proposals shall become property of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

/s/ JOSE R. LIFOIFOI
Board Chairman/Contracting Officer

Date: February 22, 2016

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd Floor Joeten Commercial Building, Oleai, Saipan, MP 96950

INVITATION FOR BIDS
DPW/SWMD16-IFB-001

GROUNDWATER, LEACHATE, AND GAS TESTING AT THE MARPI SOLID WASTE FACILITY

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog, through the Department of Public Works, are soliciting sealed bids for the Groundwater, Leachate, and Gas Testing at the Marpi Solid Waste Facility, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project package will be available on or after February 10, 2016 at the office of the Solid Waste Management Division, Lower Base Transfer Station, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of Twenty-Five Dollars **($25.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer, and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at Lower Base Transfer Station.

All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001, under Article 7.

A mandatory Pre-bid Conference is scheduled for February 29, 2016, 09:00 a.m., local time, at the office of the Solid Waste Management Division, Lower Base Transfer Station.

Prospective bidders should examine and review the invitation for bids with care. If it should appear to a prospective bidder that the performance of the work under the contract or any of the matters relative thereto is not sufficiently described or explained in the invitation for bids, or that any discrepancy exists between different parts of the invitation for bids, or that the full intent of the invitation for bids is not clear, then the prospective bidder shall submit a written request for clarification no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening at 4:30 p.m. to **Mr. Enrique Dela Cruz, Director, Solid Waste Management Division,** Lower Base Transfer Station, Saipan or fax to (670) 322-2762. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

The prospective bidder shall examine carefully the site of the proposed work and the invitation for bids before submitting a bid.

The Contracting Officer (CO) may, upon recommendation of the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), issue an addendum notifying all prospective bidders known to have received an invitation for bids, or if issued after the deadline for submission of the notice of intention to bid, to those persons who submitted such notice, of any changes to the invitation for bids. The Department of Public Works will make every reasonable attempt to notify all persons who have obtained the invitation for bids from the office of the Solid Waste Management Division by telephone to pick up the addendum or if the CO chooses, the addendum may be mailed or delivered personally or by facsimile machine. If the bid proposal requires the acknowledgement of addenda, the prospective bidder shall indicate the date of each addendum in the space provided. It shall be the prospective bidder's responsibility to confirm the existence of any addendum by telephoning the Director of Solid Waste Management Division office at (670) 322-2745/2760 no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening.

Sealed bids must be marked **"DPW/SWMD16-IFB-001."** For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Capitol Hill (formerly Emergency Management Office behind CHRB Postal Office), Saipan, no later than 10:00 a.m., local time, March 28, 2016. Bidders located outside the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than 10:00 a.m. local time, March 28, 2016, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than March 28, 2016, and must be received no later than April 06, 2016. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be caused for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Capitol Hill (formerly Emergency Management Office behind CHRB Postal Office), Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. local time, April 07, 2016. However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 10:30 a.m. local time, on March 28, 2016.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars **($25,000.00)** a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. **A surety company shall hold the Certificate of Authority (COA) from the U.S. Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General and must accompany the bid.** Bid security may be a Certified Check, Cashier's Check or Bid Bond. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660." If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with NMIAC §70-30.3-245 of the Procurement Regulations. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00. The surety company providing the Performance and Payment bonds must hold a Certificate of Authority from the U.S. Department of Treasury as an acceptable surety and must be authorized to conduct business in the CNMI. In addition, the contractor will be required to deliver a certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments or other bond obligations) exceeded the penal amount of each bond. The contract to be awarded shall extend for a period of **two (2) years** from the date of Notice to Proceed issuance.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not effect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

JAMES A. ADA
Secretary of Public Works

HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director of Procurement & Supply

Guintu to lead NMI MathCourt team

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Frederic Dean Michael Guintu will be leading the CNMI MathCourt team's campaign in next month's national competition in San Francisco. He and two other students from Agape Christian School—Quing Yuan Wang and Da Wei Cai—swept the Top 3 positions in the CNMI-Wide MathCout competition held last Jan. 30.

Grace Christian Academy's Harry Noh, who is also part of GCA's 14th Annual CNMI Academic Challenge Bowl champion team, is the fourth member of the CNMI MathCourt squad that's going to the nationals.

ACS' Duojia Yu is an alternate along with Victoria Santos, Seongbeom Song, and Ki Chang Jeoung of Marianas Baptist Academy. Team CNMI held their first practice last Feb. 6 and will have their last practice this Saturday, Feb. 27.

This will be Guintu's fifth straight time to compete in the nationals as his previous three were in elementary. This is his second time as a middle-schooler since he was part of Team CNMI in last year's tournament in Houston, Texas.

Guintu, whose father Frederick Guintu is ACS' mathematics teacher and coach, also qualified for the Scripps Regional Spelling Bee in Guam but he chose MathCouth since the competition will be held the same day on March 6.

He said that there's always been pressure from his father, a licensed mechanical engineer, being the teacher and coach but he has learned to take it as a challenge rather than be distracted. It pushed him to study harder and do his best in every competition.

He advised his teammates to prepare hard for the nationals. "I'm not really nervous. It's fun to always go to the nationals, the competition is hard that's why we need to study hard and prepare for the problems. Just enjoy the competition."

It was Wang's first time to compete and he already earned the chance to go to the nationals while Cai booked a ticket after his fourth try.

"I started competing in the MathCourt in the fourth grade. This is my first time to win individually that's why I'm eager and ready to do my share in the nationals. I always win in the team event," said Cai, who again helped ACS to win the team event. Guintu, Wang, and Yu joined Cai on Team ACS.

MBA—Santos, Jeoung, Keving Song, and Stephen Bartolo—settled for the silver, while Saipan Community School's Shan Nan Xie, Seung Ju Lee, and Mark Nam finished third in the team events.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Frederic Dean Michael Guintu, with trophy, joins the other participants of last month's CNMI-wide MathCourt competition. Guintu will be leading Team CNMI in the nationals next month in San Francisco.

Federal judge authorizes IRS to dispose Tinian Dynasty's $2.5M

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona yesterday authorized the U.S. Internal Revenue Service to dispose the $2.5 million that the owner of Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino has agreed to pay as part of a $3.03 million settlement of a criminal case.

This developed as Manglona granted yesterday Assistant U.S. Attorney Russell Lorfing's motion for the court to issue an entry of default judgment and final order of forfeiture as to Hong Kong Entertainment (Overseas) Investments Ltd.'s $2.5 million.

In granting the U.S. government's motion, Manglona ordered that HKE's $2.5 million in U.S. currency is forfeited to the U.S.

Manglona also adjudged that any right, title, and interest of HKE and that of any other person or entities in the $2.5 million are vested in the U.S. government.

Lorfing informed the court that despite published notice, no one contest the U.S. government's action to forfeit Tinian Dynasty's $2.5 million.

Lorfing said no one has appeared to defend on behalf of the $2.5 million.

HKE gave the $2.5 million to the U.S. government in the form of check last July 23 pursuant to their non-prosecutorial deal.

The new owners of HKE and the U.S. government have agreed not to prosecute the criminal case against HKE in exchange for HKE's forfeiture of $3.03 million.

The federal court dismissed the criminal charges against HKE last July at the U.S. government's request.

Bill OK'd to remove 3-day waiting period for appropriation bills

Acting governor Victor Hocog last week signed a bill to void the three-day waiting period lawmakers had to wait before acting on appropriation bills.

Senate Bill 19-62 is now Public Law 19-34 and was signed into law last Feb. 16.

The Local Law Act of 1983 requires all local bills, except for poker fee appropriations and gaming appropriations for Tinian and Rota, to lie in the upper or lower house for three legislative days after introduction before acted on by local delegations.

But the Legislature finds that "this requirement can delay critical appropriations" of local revenues for purposes like retirement benefits, scholarships, and medical referrals.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres also signed on Feb. 11 a local bill to appropriate $2 million from funds allotted to Rota under the Saipan casino law.

Rota Local Law 19-08 moves $1.54 million to the payment of 25 percent retirement cut restoration for Rota retirees and their survivors; $250,000 to employment under the Rota Mayor's Office; $50,000 to Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation for an unspecified payment owed to the delegation; $100,000 to the operations of the Rota Mayor's Office; $11,5000 for payments and repairs for Rota Department of Public Safety vehicles; and $15,000 to cover the cost of the 2016 Little League District Tournament on Tinian, among several other appropriations. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

NOTICE OF INTENT TO VOLUNTARY DISSOLVE A CORPORATION

Notice is hereby given that a Notice of Intent to dissolve APEX Construction, Inc., a corporation which is registered in Saipan, has been delivered to the Registrar of Corporations.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB16-OVR-059

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 21, 2016 **TIME: 10:00 A.M**

"GROUND MAINTENANCE SERVICES FOR OVR BUILDINGS N-2 & N-4 FOR THE OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTERET OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ARLENE KAY A. YAMAGATA, M.S. CRC
DIRECTOR OF OVR

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB16-OVR-060

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 21, 2016 **TIME: 10:30 A.M.**

"PURCHASE OF QUICKIE S-636 POWER WHEELCHAIR, A PROJECT UNDER THE OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTERET OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ARLENE KAY A. YAMAGATA, M.S. CRC
DIRECTOR OF OVR

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: RFP16-BECQ/DCRM-058

E-BID IS AUTHORIZED ON THIS RFP AND MUST BE SENT TO: procurement@pticom.com NO LATER THAN 10:00 A.M., CHAMORRO STANDARD TIME, UTC +10 HOURS BY MARCH 23, 2016

"2016 SAIPAN LAGOON USE MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE AND REVISION A PROJECT UNDER THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COASTAL QUALITY, DIVISION OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT"

The **Scope of Work** is available on or after **February 24, 2016** from the BECQ office or by e-mail request to Rebecca Skeele at skeele.crm@gmail.com

Questions regarding this project can be made to Rebecca Skeele by phone (670) 664-8313, or by email at skeele.crm@gmail.com no later than the close of business, **March 14, 2016,** Chamorro Standard Time, UTC +10 hours (email is preferred). Responses to questions shall be shared with all prospective proposers.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any imperfection in a proposal if in the best interest of the CNMI. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI Government.

/S/ FRANK M. RABAULIMAN
ADMINISTRATOR OF BECQ

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
For Food and Beverage Concession

The Northern Marianas Sports Association (hereinafter, "NMSA") is responsible for the operation, management and administration of the Susupe Sports Complex. To assure that participants and spectators are accorded adequate food and beverage services at the Complex, NMSA hereby requests proposals from currently licensed companies, experienced and capable of providing such services and wishing to be considered for a Contract to operate a food and beverage concession. The Contract term will be from June 1, 2016 to May 31, 2017.

NMSA will evaluate proposals and award a Contract for the concession service.

The RFP Package will be available until February 29, 2016 during business hours at the Law Offices of Michael A. White, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan.

A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 5, 2016, at 11:30 a.m., at the Conference room at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Proposals are due no later than 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 31, 2016 at the Law Offices of Michael A. White, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan.

Proposers are required to pay a $50.00 non-refundable fee for each copy of the RFP.

NMSA assumes no obligation of any kind for expenses incurred by a respondent to this Notice.

All inquiries must be in writing, and sent to Michael A. White at fax no. 234-9537 or emailed to mwhite@saipan.com.

Sherla Mae Sablan
Domingo M. Hocog
P.O. Box 972
Rota, MP 96951
532-1988
783-0515
PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE MATTER OF THE APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN OF THE ESTATE OF:	)	FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 16-0024
K.J.S.H. DOB (12/15/2008) Minor Child,	)	**NOTICE OF HEARING**
By:	)	
Sherla Mae Manglona Sablan and Domingo Manglona Hocog Petitioners.	)	

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardian for the estate of the above-named minor child by Sherla Mae Sablan and Domingo Hocog, Petitioners, was filed with the above-named Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will be heard on March 4, 2016 at 10:30 a.m. in Rota Courtroom, before Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758
Saipan, MP 96950

Tel: (670) 234-7859
Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK OF GUAM, **Plaintiff,** **vs.** **RYON OK CHANG,** **Defendant.**	**Small Claims No. 15-0235** **AMENDED SUMMONS**

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT: RYON OK CHANG

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED AND NOTIFIED to file any answer you wish to make to the **COMPLAINT.** You have **Twenty (20) days** after service of this **AMENDED SUMMONS** upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to **Robert Tenorio Torres, Attorney at Law, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950,** or as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Court of the above-entitled Court for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Office of the Clerk of Court, CNMI Superior Court, 1st Floor, Guma' Hustisia, Ilimwal Aweewe, House of Justice, P.O. Box 500307, Saipan, MP 96950-0307. It may be prepared and signed for you by your attorney and sent to the Clerk of Court by messenger of by mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to file an answer in accordance with this **AMENDED SUMMONS**, judgment by default pursuant to the court rules of the above-entitled Court may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

SO ORDERED on this 29th day of January, 2016.

/s/ Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk

CUC: Tank 102 shell welded, 90 pct of fuel pipeline placed

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. said it was able to achieve a milestone on their Tank 102 and pipeline project.

Technical manager for oil Maximino Simian reported to the board that for the Tank 102 construction, they were able to install the tank shell completely.

"Tank shell has been completely welded and tested by radiography and visual examination," Simian said.

"That is a bit of a milestone we've achieved," he dded.

Simian said among the current work that is being done now with the tank involves the roof structure.

The Tank 102 project involves a 500,000-gallon diesel fuel tank that will replace Tank 010, which has been found to be a source of pollution and is non-repairable.

CUC is also about to finish with the placing of eight-inch fuel pipeline for the pipeline project under Task Order 2.

The oil pipeline project is an 8-inch aboveground receiving pipeline that delivers diesel fuel from the Mobil Oil Marianas facility to CUC Power Plants 1 and 2 in Lower Base. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency had stated that until the pipeline is properly repaired or replaced, it poses a threat to the adjacent ocean.

"We have 90 percent of the pipeline placed on the ground. The remaining tasks are mostly installation of the above ground hardware," Simian said.

"There is some remaining tie in connections of different portions. Some of them are placed by trenching and others that were placed by drilling," he added.

Included in the aboveground hardware that they need to install is the testing equipment. They will also do a commissioning which will be including pipe cleaning, pressure test, and other tests and then final connection.

Due to the World War II unexploded ordnance found at the site last week, CUC has encountered a three- to four-day delay on the project.

Simian said they are anticipating completion of the project sometime in April.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Secretary of Public Works
2nd Floor Joeten Commercial Building, Oleai, Saipan, MP 96950

INVITATION FOR BIDS
DPW-16-IFB-004

Renovation of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Community Guidance Center Main Office Building

Governor Ralph Dlg. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog, through the Department of Public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for **the Renovation of the CHCC Community Guidance Center Main Office Building,** Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available on or after **February 24, 2016** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001.

There will be a Pre-bid Conference for this project on **March 11, 2016, 9:00 a.m. local time** at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **March 15, 2016** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

Prospective bidders should examine and review the invitation for bids with care. If it should appear to a prospective bidder that the performance of the work under the contract or any of the matters relative thereto is not sufficiently described or explained in the invitation for bids, or that any discrepancy exists between different parts of the invitation for bids, or that full intent of the invitation for bids is not clear, then the prospective bidder shall submit a written request for clarification no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening at 4:30 pm to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547.

The prospective bidder shall examine carefully the site of the proposed work and the invitation for bids before submitting a bid.

The Contracting Officer (CO) may, upon recommendation of the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), issue an addendum notifying all prospective bidders known to have received an invitation for bids, or if issued after the deadline for submission of the notice of intention to bid, to those persons who submitted such notice, of any changes to the invitation for bids. The Department of Public Works will make every reasonable attempt to notify all persons who obtained the invitation for bids from the Technical Services Division by telephone to pick up the addendum or if the CO chooses, the addendum may be mailed or delivered personally or by facsimile machine. If the bid proposal requires the acknowledgment of addenda, the prospective bidder shall indicate the date of each addendum in the space provided. **It shall be the prospective bidder's responsibility to confirm the existence of any addendum by telephoning the COTR at (670) 234-9828/9838 no later than ten (10) working days before the scheduled bid opening.**

Sealed bids must be marked **"DPW-16-IFB-004"**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, no later than **10:00 a.m. local time, March 29, 2016**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. local time, March 29, 2016**, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **March 29, 2016** and the BID documents must be received at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than **April 06, 2016**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Office of the Director of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan, at **10:00 a.m. local time, April 08, 2016.** However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at **10:30 a.m. local time, on March 29, 2016**.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (**$25,000.00**) a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. **Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashiers check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety requiring approval of the Attorney General must be pre-approved prior to bid submission.** Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations **§70-30.3-245**. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00. Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

a) A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
b) A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceed the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract.

Acceptable assets are only:

1) Cash
2) US Gov't Securities
3) Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
4) Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
5) Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is **Sixty (60) calendar days** upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages for delays beyond the established completion date will be assessed at the rate of **One Hundred Fifty (US$150.00)** for each and every day the work is delayed beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not effect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/s/ JAMES A. ADA
Secretary of Public Works

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director of Procurement & Supply

/s/ ESTHER L. MUNA
Chief Executive Officer, CHCC

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-16-005

WATER MAIN EXTENSION PROJECT, SAILING DRIVE, DANDAN (W12-022D)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Construction of Water Main Extension Project in Dandan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The scope of work consists of the installation of approximately 940 LF of new 8-inch PVC water line, along with approximately 500 LF of new 2" PVC water line. It will also involve the reconnection of new and existing customers onto the new waterlines within the project area.

This project is funded by a grant from the United Sates of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **75 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on **March 1, 2016 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-16-005, Water Main Extension Project, Sailing Drive, Dandan** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 18, 2016,** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. *A Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 3, 2016** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to John Riegel, CUC Water/Wastewater Chief Engineer – via email john.riegel@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Acting Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Procurement and Supply

SPECIAL NOTICE

General Contractors, Suppliers, and Interested Firms

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is inviting general contractors, suppliers, and interested firms to attend an informational conference pertaining to USEPA Grant Funded Water & Wastewater projects that CUC will procure in this fiscal year. Overall, these projects include construction work, repair work, and supply of goods and equipment on Rota, Saipan, and Tinian.

Proposed Projects for Fiscal Year 2016 (Saipan, Tinian & Rota):

- Renovation of Wastewater Lift Station SR1
- Rota Water System Improvement
- Renovation of Wastewater Lift Stations S6 & S10
- Upgraded Pump Controls for Wastewater Lift Station S3
- Tinian Water System Improvements
- Sewer Service Lines
- Improvements to the Kagman Water System
- Water Main Replacement in Capitol Hill
- Water Main Replacement in As Lito
- Replacement of the NMC Water Reservoir
- Water Main Replacement in Gualo Rai
- Repair of Stand by Generators
- Water Main Replacement-Herman's Bakery
- Water Main Replacement in Chalan Kiya
- Water Main Extension on Sailing Drive
- Design and Construction of Improvements to the Maui Well Shafts

Conference Information:

Place : CUC Conference Room
3rd Floor, Room 15, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building
Dandan, Saipan, MP 96950
Date : March 3, 2016
Time : 10:00 a.m. ChST
Contact : Manny B. Sablan, Purchasing Officer,
e-mail address: manny.sablan@cucgov.org
John Riegel, Senior Engineer, e-mail address: john.riegel@cucgov.org

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

UB40 Live in Guam, Saipan postponed

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The organizer of UB40's concert for Guam and Saipan said it will happen but no date has been finalized yet.

The earlier scheduled concert that was supposed to be held today in Guam and on Saturday on Saipan is ultimately postponed.

"The concerts previously announced and scheduled for Guam and Saipan for this week have been postponed until further notice," organizer Steven Brownstein Entertainment said in an announcement.

"The concerts will happen as we're currently negotiating the final details in regards to flights, logistics, and other important matters to ensure these successful events," it added.

However, no final date was announced by SBE as of yesterday's announcement.

"At this time we are confirmed for next week however existing flight availability accompanied with the unexpected time frame to transport necessary band equipment could ultimately determine a later date," SBE said.

SBE gave options to their customers with regards to their purchased tickets.

Existing tickets, including winning and complimentary tickets, will still be honored, but those who no longer wish to see the concert, refunds are offered at the exact location the ticket was purchased.

"This is for Guam customers as Saipan customers have already been offered refunds from our participating ticket outlets," SBE said.

SBE added that General Admission and VIP tickets are still available for purchase at any existing participating ticket outlets on Guam and Saipan.

"Once more we understand that this announcement is delayed and we apologize for this. We only look forward to giving our fans good news so an announcement of anything but positive would not be newsworthy at all," SBE said.

SBE added that they have been working tirelessly for the concert to push through.

"As anxious as you all are, note that your SBE Team has been anxiously working around the clock to make the UB40 concerts in Guam and Saipan a reality," SBE said.

FACEBOOK

The scheduled Guam and Saipan concerts of UB40 this week have temporarily been shelved by organizer Steven Brownstein Entertainment due to flights and logistical problems.

7th Chamorro festival in San Diego on March 19

The Chamorro Hands in Education Links Unity is leading the celebration of the 7th Annual Chamorro Cultural Festival on March 19 at the California State University-San Marcos. The event is free and open to all.

CHE'LU is a San Diego-based non-profit organization focused on preserving and promoting the Pacific Island culture of the Chamorro people, the indigenous people of the Mariana Islands chain—including the CNMI and Guam. Che'lu in Chamorro means blood related.

The CCF is among the highly anticipated events in Sand Diego. The event celebrates the arts, culture, and customs of the people of the Mariana Islands.

It is a unique day of celebration as it unites the Chamorros from all around the world with music, cultural dance performances, educational workshops, local food and cuisine, arts and crafts, and other products to accentuate the Chamorro in everyone.

"The CCF helps many of us Chamorros—and those who appreciate the Chamorro culture—celebrate, appreciate, and educate people on 4,000-plus years of Chamorro history," said CHE'LU board of directors chair Danny Blas.

"Every year this event grows and grows. The CCF has become the premiere event of mainland Chamorros, and our team is very proud to be able to continue the work to preserve our culture, language, and way of life."

The CCF was previously held in San Diego but the increasing number of visitors annually, it was moved to SCU-San Marcos due to a larger venue, protected parking space, more seating areas, enhanced facilities like free wifi, and family-friendly restrooms.

CHE'LU was founded in 2005 in San Diego, which is home to the largest number of Chamorro people outside the Mariana Islands. CHE'LU helps to preserve the Chamorro culture by building a life-size replica of a Chamorro outrigger canoe—the Sakman Chamorro—which last sailed in 1742 before being destroyed by the Spanish colonizers. ***(Jon Perez)***

Great Green Fleet welcomed to Naval Base Guam

APRA HARBOR, Guam—Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Marianas' energy team and mascot 'Brite' welcomed an historic port visit Feb. 14 by the Great Green Fleet and reiterated its renewable-energy commitment on Guam. The John C. Stennis Strike Group is part of the yearlong initiative highlighting the Navy's efforts to transform its energy use to increase operational capability.

"The arrival of the Great Green Fleet to Naval Base Guam (NBG) is a significant milestone," said NAVFAC Marianas and Joint Region Marianas Assistant Regional Engineer (ARE) Cmdr. Joe Yates. "This was an excellent opportunity to highlight the numerous shore-based renewable energy initiatives that are active throughout the region."

NAVFAC Marianas Energy Manager Desiree Masterson said the installations contribute to supporting energy security through the use of renewable energy and sustainable practices. "Sustainable energy efforts protect mission capabilities," she said. "Investment in environmentally responsible technologies afloat and ashore reduces greenhouse gas emissions and lessens dependency on fossil fuels." Current initiatives on NBG include: photovoltaic (PV) arrays and solar thermal domestic water heating systems. There are 636 solar-powered street lights; seven facilities have rooftop-mounted PV systems; and a 250 kilowatt solar array is actively contributing to energy efficiency. "These renewables contribute to stabilizing energy security during a grid failure," Masterson added.

According to NBG Energy Manager Karl Dreikron the future is bright for renewable energy projects on the installation. "Proposed projects consist of a 1.6 megawatt solar array directly supporting the waste water treatment plant; an 850 kilowatt expansion to the existing solar array field, and a 7 megawatt solar array in direct support of the installation's power grid," Dreikron said. Energy is critical to the Department of the Navy (DoN) and to its ability to provide the global presence necessary to ensure stability, deter potential adversaries, and present options in times of crisis—wherever and whenever they might arise.

The Stennis Strike Group is on a regularly scheduled deployment to the 7th Fleet area of operations. All ships are using energy efficiency measures, to include technologies and operational procedures, in the course of their normal operations. The ships are also powered by alternative fuels, with the guided-missile destroyers and cruiser as the first to use a blend of advanced biofuel and marine diesel throughout an operational deployment.

In 2009, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus issued the following five goals aimed at transforming the DoN's energy use: Increase Alternative Energy Use DoN-Wide: by 2020, 50 percent of total energy consumption will come from alternative sources; Increase Alternative Energy Ashore: by 2020, DoN will produce at least 50 percent of shore-based energy requirements from alternative sources; 50 percent of Navy and Marine Corps installations will be net-zero; Sail the "Great Green Fleet": DoN will demonstrate a Green Strike Group in local operations by 2012 and sail it by 2016; Reduce Non-Tactical Petroleum Use: By 2015, DoN will reduce petroleum use in the commercial fleet by 50 percent; Energy Efficient Acquisition: Evaluation of energy factors will be mandatory when awarding Department of the Navy contracts for systems and buildings. ***(PR)***

USDA seeking REAP applications in Pacific

HILO, Hawaii— USDA Rural Development is seeking applications for the Rural Energy for America Program to compete for FY 2016 funding. Grant applications for Hawaii and the Western Pacific are due by close of business May 2, 2016. Loan guarantees are competed throughout the year.

Last year, the Hawaii/Western Pacific region received 17 awards totaling more than $1.4 million through the REAP program. Loan guarantees cover up to 75 percent of total eligible project costs with grants covering up to 25 percent. A loan-grant combination may fund up to 75 percent of total eligible project costs.

REAP grants are available to agricultural producers with at least 50 percent of their gross income coming from agricultural operations and small businesses in eligible rural areas. Funds can be used for the purchase, installation and construction of renewable energy systems such as small and large solar and wind generation, hydropower below 30 megawatts, biomass, geothermal and ocean generation.

When making energy efficiency improvements, funds may be used for the following: high efficiency heating; ventilation and air conditioning systems; insulation; lighting; cooling or refrigeration units; doors and windows; electric; solar or gravity pumps for sprinkler pivots; switching from diesel to electric irrigation motor; and replacement of energy-inefficient equipment.

For more information on the REAP program, contact John Antonio, state energy coordinator at (808) 933-8318 or john.antonio@hi.usda.gov.

Additional contacts include the following Business Programs Specialists:

Hawaii & Maui County: Lori M. Nekoba, Program Specialist, (808) 933-8312 or lori.nekoba@hi.usda.gov.

Oahu, Kauai & American Samoa: Shirley M.U. Heatherly, Program Specialist, (808) 541-2600 Ext. 139 or Shirley.heatherly@hi.usda.gov.

Western Pacific: Anthony C. Barcinas, Program Specialist, (671) 300-8567 or Anthony.barcinas@pb.usda.gov.

President Obama's plan for rural America has brought about historic investment and resulted in stronger rural communities. Under the President's leadership, these investments in housing, community facilities, businesses and infrastructure have empowered rural America to continue leading the way-strengthening America's economy, small towns and rural communities. ***(PR)***

MVA concerned over delays on tourists processing through immigration booths

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Tenorio

The Marianas Visitors Authority is concerned on the reported delays in the processing of some tourists through the immigration booths at the Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport, especially during peak hours of plane arrivals.

MVA managing director Perry Tenorio raised to the board the need to have a dialogue with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to address the issue.

"I think we need to have a meeting with them," Tenorio said.

"We're concerned. Our Korean partners are just concerned on the delay of them getting processed," he added.

The board mentioned that CBP was willing to add more booths but there is a lack of space at the airport, however, Tenorio said that of about 12 booths currently in the airport, only seven agents are able to man them at any given time.

Because of this, should a flight from China arrive first, it would take about three hours to process a flight coming in from South Korea.

The board said CBP should be able to man all counters.

Asked if there is a way for flights not to get congested during peak hours, Tenorio said they can't dictate time of arrivals on airlines.

"That's what CBP would like, where we're not stacking [the flights with] each other but the reality is we can't control that," Tenorio said.

Tenorio said they are trying to get information on the matter but there was reluctance from CBP due to "security reasons" according to Tenorio.

"They need to process this people faster," Tenorio said.

Tenorio noted that the issue is having an impact on the CNMI's tourism.

"It is having an impact on our future growth. Not to mention we will have hotels coming online soon so it's going to be more congested up there," Tenorio said.

In an interview, Tenorio said it would only be logical for them to ask to have the booths all manned even just during peak hours.

"It's not going to be peak all the time because some of our flights are not daily. At least during those periods where we have the planes stacked, coming in very close to each other, I would think it would make logical sense to be a little heavy on having personnel there," Tenorio said.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Merchants ordered to submit weights/measures license applications on time

Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres, through the Office of the Secretary of Commerce, wishes to inform the general public and all business establishments using weights and measure devices in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands that it will reject all devices and will issue a Stop-Use Order, in accordance with 4 CMC, Division 5, §5426, to any business using weighting and measuring devises for commercial transactions that fails to submit a new and/or renewal on time applications for a Weights & Measures License.

Therefore, the Secretary of Commerce encourages all businesses using weighing and measuring devices to comply with the weight and measure requirements. For more information on this matter please contact the Enforcement & Compliance Division at (670) 664-3065 or email: cnmi.enforcement@commerce.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

401(k) programs topic at SHRM meeting tomorrow

The Society for Human Resource Management NMI Chapter will have Gabrielle Bamba, director of Client Services for ASC Trust Corporation, presenting at its February general membership meeting.

Bamba will provide an introduction to 401(k) programs, eligibility and enrollment, investments and returns, tax advantages, and a variety of related topics.

This lunch meeting will be held at the Pacific Islands Club Charley's on Thursday, Feb. 25, from 11:30am to 1:30pm.

The presentation includes the delicious PIC lunch buffet at the cost of $20 for SHRM members and $30 for non-members. Seats are limited, so reserve your seat by contacting Pina Deleon Guerrero by phone at 236-8821 or by e-mail at pdlguerrero@laolaobaygolf.com or by e-mail to Frank Gibson at flgibson@yahoo.com. ***(PR)***

MHS Class of 1981 meeting Saturday

Marianas High School Class of 1981 will have meeting to talk about their upcoming class reunion.

The meeting is set this Saturday, Feb. 27, 5:30pm at the Oleai Beach Bar & Grill behind The Shack. ***(PR)***

SSHS PTSA meeting tomorrow

Saipan Southern High School will have a Parent-Teacher-Student Association meeting tomorrow, Feb. 25, starting at 5:45pm in the school cafeteria.

Everyone is invited to participate and receive updates on the school year and PTSA activities. Following the brief meeting, there will be mini workshop sessions that will provide valuable information on academic testing, financial aid for college, vocational training, and other relevant topics.

For more information, call SSHS at 664-4000 or Glenna Sakisat-Palacios Reyes, SSHS PTSA president, at 483-3278. Or you can find us on facebook.com/mantaptsa.

Thank you for involvement in the PTSA. We look forward to seeing you all. ***(PR)***

VA benefits outreach on Feb. 25

The U.S. Department of Veterans Benefits Administration will be conducting a Veterans Benefits Outreach on Feb 25, 2016, from 0900 to 1630, at the Saipan VA Outreach Clinic, MH II Bldg., Suite 206, Marina Heights Business Park in Garapan.

A Benefits counselor will be available to answer questions and take claims.

Points of Contact are Ruth Coleman, 322-0035, Lee Stahli 1-671-648-0090.

We are encouraging all veterans, family members, and widowers to attend and avail of the services. ***(PR)***

Red Cross Walkathon set for April 30

The American Red Cross is proud to announce its 30th Annual Red Cross Walkathon is scheduled for April 30.

The 30th anniversary event will be extra exciting with many special activities including a carnival and health fair, drinks, food, and a T-shirt for all participants. There will be prizes for various categories including student with the most pledges as well as awards and recognition for top schools. The 10K and 5K event will be held on all three islands starting at 6am.

Please mark your calendar, support the Red Cross and plan on a morning of exercise and family fun!

For more information about participating or volunteering, please contact the Red Cross at 234-3459. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950
HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

PROMOTIONAL & OPEN COMPETITIVE
EXAMINATION ANNOUCEMENT HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

It is the policy of the State Board of Education, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, that the Public School System Human Resources Office shall be applied and administered according to the principles of equal employment opportunity. Applications shall be evaluated regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability, or national origin.

Applicants for this position must be eligible and authorized to work in the U.S., including the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

POSITION/TITLE: JROTC ARMY INSTRUCTOR
EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT NO: PSS-2016-004
OPENING DATE: February 8, 2016 CLOSING DATE: Until Filled
SALARY: PL – Per Minimum Instructor Pay (MIP); Step(s): Per MIP; Salary: Per MIP
BENEFITS: Salary commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus excellent benefits (including Life Insurance, Retirement Benefits, and Paid Leave/Holidays).
LOCATION: **JROTC Program**

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Must be a retired non-commissioned officer under pay grade E-6 to E-9.
- Certified as an Army Instructor by U.S. Army Cadet Command.
- Must have favorable result of current background check.
- Have no personal habits or character traits that are questionable from a security or social standpoint (financial irresponsibility, violation of standard of conduct in accordance with AR 600-50).

POSITION/TITLE: DIRECTOR OF ARMY INSTRUCTION
EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT NO.: PSS-2016-005
OPENING DATE: February 8, 2016 CLOSING DATE: Until Filled
SALARY: PAY LEVEL: UNGRADED STEP: UNGRADED - MIP (Minimum Instructor Pay)
BENEFITS: Salary commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus excellent benefits (including Life Insurance, Retirement Benefits, and Paid Leave/Holidays).
LOCATION: **PSS, JROTC PROGRAM**

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Be a retired field grade commissioned officer (Lieutenant Colonel or Colonel) with a minimum of a baccalaureate degree.
- As a matter of policy, personnel retired under Title 10, USC, CHAPTER 1223 (Reserve Service), are not eligible for employment in JROTC Program.
- Be of good moral character and have the mental ability, positive attitude, physical appearance and condition, and neatness required for favorable representation of the program and the Army in the school and civilian community.
- Demonstrate the professional ability to lead, motivate, and influence young men and women to learn and develop leadership, self-reliance and discipline, responsiveness to constituted authority, and attributes of good citizenship and patriotism.
- Have no record of conviction by court martial, no record of time lost-to-be-made-good under Title 10 USC, Section 972 and no record of civil convictions except for minor traffic offenses.
- Exceptions may be granted by the CG, USACC, using AR 601-210 as a guide.
- Have general knowledge of course subject matter and demonstrated instructional ability.
- Meet retention medical fitness standards of AR 40-501 and the initial Army procurement table of weight standards of AR 40-501.
- Possess sufficient medical, physical, and mental fitness, and be willing to perform, participate in, and supervise activities consistent with the conduct of the JROTC program.
- Not have been retired from active duty more than 5 years at the time of initial employment.
- Eligibility may be extended to 6 years for individuals meeting the provision of paragraph 4-9b of Cadet Command Regulation 145-2.

POSITION/TITLE: SENIOR ARMY INSTRUCTOR
EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT NO: PSS-2016-007
OPENING DATE: February 8, 2016 CLOSING DATE: Until Filled SALARY: PAY LEVEL: UNGRADED STEP: UNGRADED - MIP (Minimum Instructor Pay)
BENEFITS: Salary commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus excellent benefits (including Life Insurance, Retirement Benefits, and Paid Leave/Holidays).
LOCATION: **JROTC PROGRAM**

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Commissioned Officer retired from the U.S. Army, with a Bachelors Degree or higher from a U.S. accredited college or university OR AA degree for Warrant Officer provided employee completes BA degree requirements no later than four (4) years after date of employment.
- Must be certified to Instruct by Cadet Command and have no record of civil conviction.
- Must meet all Instructor accession prerequisites IAW AR 145-2.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

INTERESTED APPLICANTS MAY OBTAIN AND SUBMIT COMPLETED APPLICATION FORMS TO THE PSS HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE AT CNMI PSS CENTRAL OFFICE BUILDING, FIRST FLOOR, BWUGHOS STREET, SUSUPE.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MUST BE ATTACHED TO APPLICATION FORMS: (1) COPY OF DIPLOMA/DEGREE, (2) TRANSCRIPTS, (3) POLICE CLEARANCE (FROM PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR PAST SIX MONTHS), (4) VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT LETTER, (5) RESUME, AND (6) TEACHING CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE).

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MAY BE SUBMITTED TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE OR MAILED TO: CNMI PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, ATTN: HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE, CNMI PSS CENTRAL OFFICE BUILDING, FIRST FLOOR, BWUGHOS STREET, SUSUPE, P.O. BOX 501370CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950, TEL. NOS. (670) 237-3052/79/59/31.

YOUR APPLICATION FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE PSS HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE ON OR BEFORE THE CLOSING DATE OF THE POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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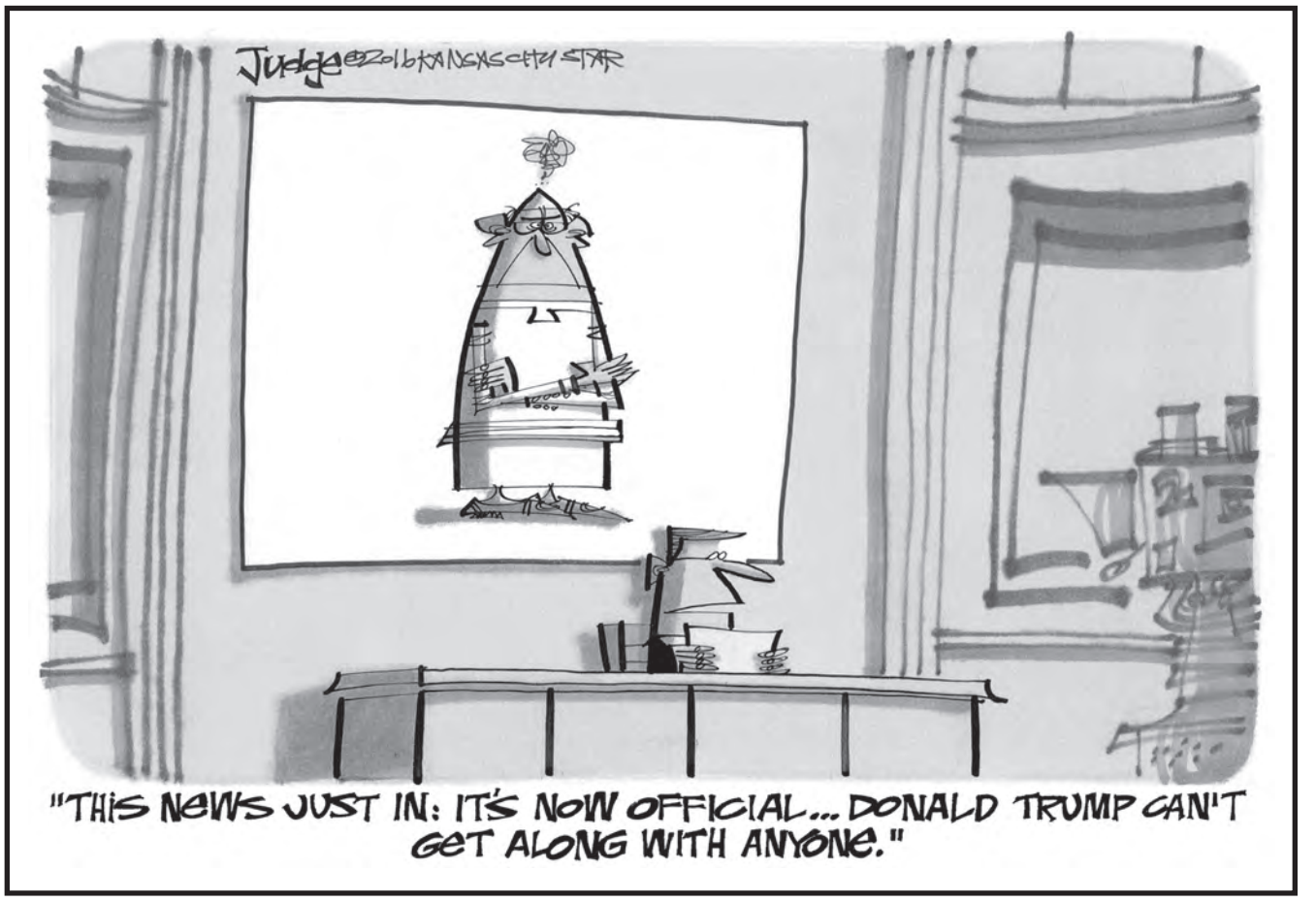

EDITORIAL

Defeating the Zika virus before the Olympics begin

Brazil has dispatched nearly 250,000 military personnel to defeat an enemy that is wily and relentless: Aedes aegypti, the mosquito that transmits the Zika virus.

The virus has been blamed for a spike in the number of infants born with brain damage in Brazil and other countries. The World Health Organization has declared a global emergency and is scrambling to contain Zika.

The troops in Brazil, however, didn't wield the typical weapons of mosquito warfare— trucks laden with insecticide, bottles of repellent, reams of netting. Instead they came armed with fliers. Yes, sheets of paper that instructed residents how to eradicate a pest that thrives in poor communities where residents gather water in rooftop tanks or containers, inadvertently creating ideal breeding conditions for the insect.

These soldiers and residents battle an aggressive and resilient foe, and, increasingly, the fear, suspicion and misinformation that can sweep through communities with as much virulence as the virus itself.

Is Brazil up to the challenge of defeating Zika in time for the Summer Olympics, set to begin in Rio de Janeiro this August? Stay tuned. This will get up close and personal. The country has a huge economic and political stake in staging a thrilling Olympiad, which doesn't include a medal competition for mosquito swatting. Bronze won't do.

Brazilian leaders have donned T-shirts bearing a deceased cartoon mosquito for the optimistically dubbed "Zika Zero" campaign. There's a catchy slogan: "A mosquito is not stronger than an entire country."

But Brazil is going to need more than a tag line to triumph in this fight. It will have to punch above its weight.

The Zika crisis is only the latest Olympics-sized challenge for Brazil.

Last August brought headlines that the sewage-clotted waters of Rio's Guanabara Bay, site of the aquatic events at the Olympics, had sickened a South Korean windsurfer. He was hospitalized for dehydration, vomiting and dizziness after an Olympic sailing test.

In September, the recession-bound country's finances took a major hit, when its sovereign debt rating was cut to "junk."

And there's a blossoming corruption scandal involving the state-controlled oil company, Petrobras, and Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff. The Brazilian president's popularity is racing toward zero: Only about 5 percent of her constituents say she is doing a good or great job, Reuters reports. A recent poll found that 92 percent of Brazilians think the country is "not on the right track." Ouch.

And now … Zika.

How goes the battle? Too early to tell. But there are cautionary tales from the front: One Brazil state recently halted the use of a mosquito larvicide after an Argentine doctor's group warned that the chemical could be causing infant brain damage. Their proof? None. Zilch. Zero. Scientists in the U.S. and Brazil say that there is no scientific basis to make

See ZIKA on Page 11

Playing by the rules

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.

My Chinese stepson returns to China shortly; a tourist who overstayed his visa, I kept him as a tolerated technical "illegal" for as long as my petition for his immigrant status was pending. When it was approved, we applied for a change of status. The rules boomed and ungroomed my little menagerie.

My petition for him and his Mom to migrate when approved meant he could not change status immediately for though I applied before he was 21, the approval occurred after, so he is to be treated accordingly, waiting his turn in line. That's about seven years long minimum. He was not too pleased with the new rules; he gave up a job in China to come to Saipan, finding himself a new love, too. I cannot do much to change the rules. He returns to China and if he desires to move back to Saipan, application for other immigration status can be arranged.

My wife's application for a change of status was returned lacking certain documents I though were redundant since they were already submitted in my petition, a case of non-smarts since it would have been OK had I applied simultaneously with my petition.

My wife returned to China to care for parents; her status change was deemed incomplete so the application fee was returned. I could have lost a bundle. Besides, I did not know my wife could not leave without permission once the application on the change of status was made. Ignorance of the law, I know, is no excuse.

I was at the Immigration office on an appointment recently when I discovered that I left my passport at home. My driver's license was on the driver's side pocket of my car that my stepson drove to take guests to the Mañagaha ferry. The guard knew who I was, and though I carried a bank-issued credit card with my photo, the rule required a government-issued identification. I was not carrying one.

I left two daughters in Honolulu summer of 1979. We came from Manila and left them with their grandparents in Honolulu. Our youngest was over 2 with a Canadian passport as she was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Her mother and elder sister both traveled with U.S. passports, and the Philippine government issued mine. We carried no document identifying how we were related. My Caucasian wife and I were traveling to Chicago and the officer just assumed that the children travelled with us. So he asked me to report to the U.S. Immigration in Chicago.

I showed up in Daley Center without our toddler. The officer hit the ceiling, eyed an "alien" traveling with a foreign passport but with a green card, and with an edge on his voice, he said, "Mr. Vergara, you obviously have a very low regard for the federal laws of this country." I was stunned by the opening salvo but stayed quiet. It did not matter. I was remiss in fully knowing and complying with the rules.

On record, immigration official have my data readily accessible in their terminal. There was that incident in the Saskatchewan-North Dakota border where the officer point blank asked me, in front of two daughters and my wife, "if I married my wife so I could stay in the country." Instead of getting angry, I smiled and said, "Yes." It was not illegal but it was obviously meant to unhinge me, to offend an ordinary onion-skinned Pinoy but I saw it coming. I was not. Instead, my brassiness offended the officer.

Down in Brownsville, Texas, on a trip, I asked my colleagues if they would go across the border with me for some real Tacos in Metamoros. I was attired in a three-piece suit, but it took me six hours to return even with a green card. The officer who luckily was a church member of my denomination was candid enough to say that I fitted the profile of a "Flip" trying to slip into the U.S. through the Mexican border. The rare Filipino that shows up at the Texas border, decked out like I was, was understandably suspect.

Much earlier in '69, I went to Pea Eye from the East Coast, returned through Seattle. Not surprisingly, my luggage was thoroughly examined for drugs; it did not help that I checked in some souvenir knives, swords, and lances along with sporting a disheveled and longish hairdo. Identified as a Methodist cleric, something did not compute, thus, the thorough examination.

Honolulu, Chicago, North Dakota, Metamoros, and Seattle are the tip of the iceberg in a long history of jostling with Immigration. I should probably feel like I was picked upon but the officers were neither discriminatory nor rude except for the North Dakota dude. I was the one who did not pay attention to the rules. The Chicago officer's words were very pertinent: I didn't heed the Federal laws of the country.

WASC asked NMC to have all its teaching staff's degrees earned outside of the United States be assessed by an external third party. I applied to teach English but my '65 BA college degree had to be assessed. It's the rule.

For my appointment at USCIS Saipan, I did not have the requisite ID. I was refused my appointment. No complaint here. We live by rules.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

New lingering issues at home

The death of the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia was awash all over the political landscape of the country. Such tidings derailed my weighing issues for this corner of the paper momentarily.

Actually, I was preparing to cause ripples into the pond of life here when a national columnist further described late judge as a man of faith and an "intellectual anchor" of the U.S. Supreme Court. His was a tidal wave. Mine were teeny ripples.

In reverence to the late judge, I deferred to my corner to look for more pennies, nickels, and dimes for my costly and potent medication. This is more up my alley.

Now, there are serious home foreclosures, terrorism, earthquakes, mega-tsunami, Zika or Tika, troubling economic uncertainty, regional security, and stagnant salaries and wages that have ruined quality of life among villagers in the islands.

Broke! The NMI has gone past fiscal solvency fueled by our pen chance to bankrupt everything in our way. With persistent economic depression it is broke or bankrupt!

It can't even meet remitting its obligation to the 75 percent under the Settlement Fund recently revealed by Trustee Joyce Tang. Have kleptocrats done anything concrete to spur economic growth and recovery? Imagine meeting the needs of the multitude beyond retirees!

Do I expect them to understand the dire effects of insolvency against the multitude? With projected shortfall in revenue of not less than $7 million this fiscal year, is there a chance the NMI could meet obligations for healthcare, education, and pension for retirees? Is there a Plan B somewhere that could serve as a blueprint how the NMI would work the clock on economic revival? Or has it also been relegated to adhoc planning?

Without economic prosperity there's no chance to give employees in either sector an increase of some sort so they could provide adequately for their families. Insolvency (broke) would sink every corner of paradise into a hellish hole!

Internal Discussion: There's a plan to meet with Guam legislators to hash out intra-Marianas issues from healthcare to lack of inter-island airline services.

I'm not particularly optimistic of the impending meeting given the usual glorification of the same tired old issues discussed since three decades ago. It's the usual dish of "after all is said and done a lot more is said than done." Fruitless! But da boysis needed the "official" photo-op and replicate Obamanesque when nobody's listening.

With common sense in tow legislators ought to know by now that problem identification is history. It's now problem-solving time! Let's see what's under your sleeves, i.e., resolve funding for CHC now piece meal some $2 million a year, resolution of long-term and catastrophic illnesses, pinning the cause of Type II diabetes; money to sufficiently defray expenses of PSS; defining the loss of airline services and inter-island shipping; among others.

Evidently, what are your plans to kick-start economic revival? It seems you're adept on tertiary measures. How about a primary measure like the persistent economic depression? Has it dawned on you why the rudderless journey of the NMI sinking deeper into a fiscal crisis? Isn't this internally inflicted where legislators use political relationship review as the mouthwash and distraction for failing fiduciary duty?

Resolve Is Missing: The NMI is bankrupt! What have you done to institute fundamental measures to arrest deficit spending, wastes and a path to economic recovery? Obviously, you've clustered into the "do-nothing" corner as kleptocrats fearful or edgy at doing the right things by doing them right.

Otherwise, you would have instituted cutting the bloated government payroll; reduce the wasteful bicameral legislature into a unicameral system limiting membership to eight; reduce the fleet of government vehicles to 20; disallow leases of expensive vehicles; cut the $2,500 per month per senator to zero; realign all so-called affairs of the indigenous people to fall under a single umbrella; conduct desk audits on all departments and agencies to determine skeletal staffing requirements including qualifications, among others.

Kleptocrats on the hill must come to terms with the insolvency of this government. The firewall of self-denial would eventually crumble of its own weight. It still is the economy, stupid!

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune*.*

Senseless Increase: The CUC board approved increasing utility rates for private industries and the NMI government. If the Public Utilities Commission approves it the new rate goes into effect for the two entities. The board thought its rickety decision successfully skipped ratepayers.

When utilities for private industries spikes, it would simply pass on such increase to ratepayers by increasing their prices on goods and services. At day's end the group you thought you had saved are caught by way of having to pay for higher prices in basic goods. Why subject them to indirect costs when they had to deal with stagnant salaries for over twenty years now? Do you see the shortsightedness in your decision?

But why slam a half-cocked increase against the most productive sector of the NMI community? This could even trigger job cuts in order to stay afloat. It's joblessness for quite a number of people including high school students doing part time jobs after school. It's the unintended consequence of a shallow-based decision. Is it your infinitesimal wisdom to raise rates under a viciously depressed economy?

The NMI government owes CUC over $30 million it finds woefully difficult paying on time. Why risk forcing more debts against a clientele that can't meet obligations on time? If only you could employ simple apprehension or seek expert assistance from your consultant on issues of substance maybe, and just maybe, you could begin discerning the difference between policy and micro-management. Your shallow decision rests in the latter!

Beyond Paris, questionable efforts to combat climate change

Germany has long been a leading advocate for confronting and ameliorating climate change. But actions speak louder than words—or signatures on an international accord. The recent Volkswagen scandal is only the latest case of climate policy hypocrisy.

Meeting in Paris last December, countries around the globe finally recognized the generally accepted scientific evidence that climate change is real. They also accepted some responsibility to do something about it.

To much fanfare, 195 countries, including Germany and the United States, signed the Paris agreement pledging to hit targets to drop emissions, cut carbon and keep our aging earth from experiencing too many hot flashes and cold extremities.

Developed democratic countries, pushed by their citizens, led the charge for a comprehensive agreement to atone for past polluting and to prevent developing states from repeating their own sins. Canada, England, France—they all chimed in and tried to convince, coerce and cajole those developing countries to be energy ascetics. That was a tough sell. The developing world now wants its turn to crank out the carbon and catch up to the already rich, gas-burning and global-warming recidivists.

Looking beyond the narratives of the industrialized world's planned sacrifice, however, some of the stories seem a little less noble or credible.

France, for example, is fine with less fossil fuel because it depends mostly on nuclear power for progress: Up to 78 percent of its electrical needs are met by the near zero-carbon emitting nuclear plants. Future plans to cut its dependency on nuclear plants while also cutting carbon emissions will certainly be a challenge.

Germany laudably boasts that it is able to reduce the amount of carbon it emits and shut down its nuclear power plants because it has developed enough alternative wind and solar power to provide clean and nearly free energy for all. In fact, German statistics recently peaked when satisfying more than 50 percent of its electricity demand through solar power, and nearly 80 percent through all renewable resources.

In each case of selective carbon curtailment, it is expected that a nation seeks its self-interest while also acting simultaneously to protect its competitive advantages. But Germany recently went one step further by publicly advocating an anti-polluting stance, while at the same time a dominant corporation powering the German economic juggernaut acted surreptitiously to undermine environmental goals.

Volkswagen, Germany's industrial behemoth, figured it could advocate for tougher rules for others, but cheat its way to success by developing a workaround to America's basic EPA auto-emission requirements. VW crafted an elegant, difficult-to-detect and fraudulent solution to the inconvenient pollution standards. It installed software in 11 million diesel vehicles worldwide that triggered a clean-emissions setting calibrated for a laboratory — not actual road use.

Moreover, there is evidence that in the case of auto emissions the European Union was, if not complicit, suspiciously aware of autos failing emission tests years before the VW scandal, according to European tests done as early as 2007.

Denied military clout to build and project power, modern German governments have forged uniquely strong ties with industry. Business-friendly industrial policies and an export-focused foreign policy support and underwrite the economic powerhouse that is a 21st-century Germany's "Wirtschaftswunder"—economic miracle. Achieving that new modern miracle sometimes seems to take precedence over any other policy, principle, norm, standard or goal.

Economics have trumped global environmental and public health concerns in the past. In the 1980s, when the country was still divided, West Germany tried to export domestically unacceptable radioactively contaminated milk to developing countries, including Egypt. Other European countries were complicit in the practice and caught.

So while the world's leaders are self-congratulating and citizens applaud the historic Paris agreement, the world must not turn a blind eye to the ways that rules can be broken. When a powerful nation like Germany dominantly projects power and influence by export, consumers and countries need to cry foul when those export goods are not so good for the world.

By MARKOS KOUNALAKIS
The Sacramento Bee

Markos Kounalakis is a research fellow at Central European University and visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution. Contact him at markos@stanford.edu

ZIKA

From Page 10

that claim, The Wall Street Journal reports.

Some Brazilians blame Zika on a British biotech company that released a re-engineered mosquito strain. Others promote conspiracy theories that involve childhood vaccines. Some doubt the disease even exists. All of that could impede prevention.

Zika—and the mosquito—can be vanquished. We're happy to see that the World Health Organization has reversed course and signed on to our editorial board's previously declared anti-mosquito crusade: Use genetically modified mosquitoes to wipe out pest populations. That is a smart long-term strategy, with emphasis on long.

Brazil has only five-plus months before more than 10,000 athletes from 206 countries arrive. It has to show the world that after a muddled start, it can mount a credible campaign against Zika-carrying mosquitoes.

Brazil will need to convince athletes that it is safe enough to compete, and convince potential visitors that it is safe enough to watch—particularly women who are pregnant or plan to try soon. We imagine there are quite a few airline and hotel reservations that are now on hold, as people around the world watch the epic battle of Brazil vs. the mosquito.

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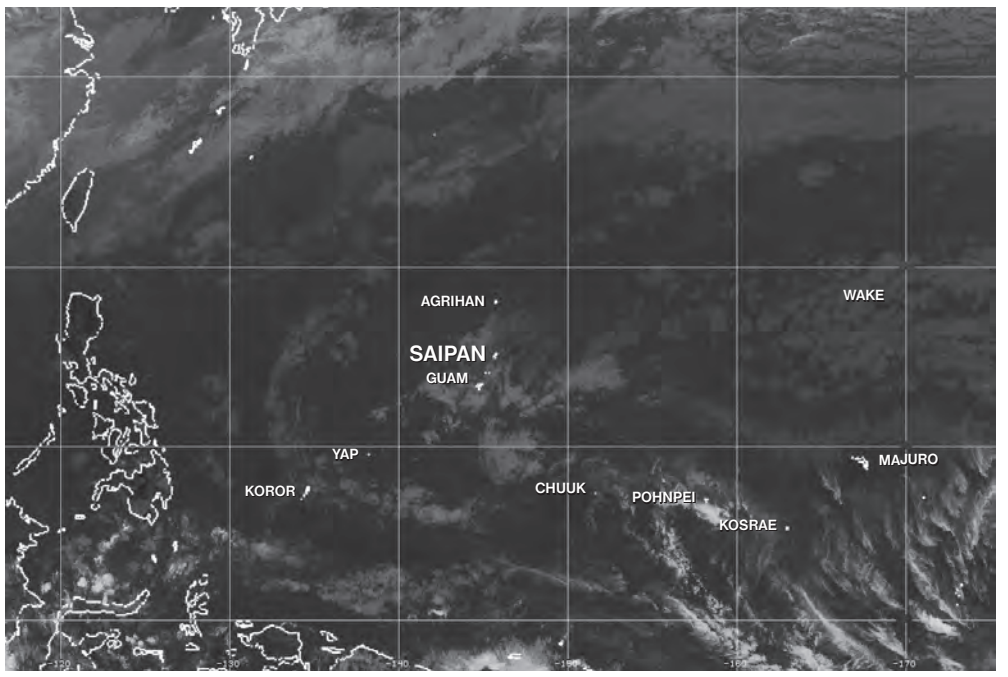
The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:22 PM, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2016
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weak shear line near Iwo To island runs southwestward from 25N145E to end near 20N130E. Cloudiness and patchy rain are found along and up to 100 miles northwest of the shear line. A trade-wind surge is causing scattered showers that run between Yap and Koror within 75 miles of a curved line from 16N135E to 11N133E to 7N137E to 5N144E. An upper-level low southwest of Guam at about 12N143E is helping to trigger scattered showers across the Mariana Islands between 8N and 17N from 142E to 150E. A shear line also runs eastward from 13N151E to 11N165E to beyond 11N180. Clouds and scattered showers are along and up to 90 miles north of the shear line. Trade-wind convergence is causing scattered showers in a large area near Wake Island between 13N and 22N from 158E to the date line elsewhere across most of Micronesia there are moderate to locally strong trade winds with patchy areas of light showers.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Showers	▲84	▼77
Palau	Mostly Sunny	▲87	▼76
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼76
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼79
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86	▼79
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼79
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼80

Around the Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲81	▼61
Beijing	Sunny	▲46	▼24
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲58	▼54
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼68
London	Mostly Sunny	▲46	▼27
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲81	▼52
Manila	Mostly Sunny	▲89	▼75
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲88	▼66
Miami	Cloudy	▲80	▼71
New York	Rain	▲43	▼37
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲44	▼33
Paris	Partly Cloudy	▲49	▼33
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲46	▼25
Rome	Partly Cloudy	▲66	▼50
Salem	Mostly Sunny	▲60	▼39
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲69	▼51
Seoul	Sunny	▲37	▼23
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	▲47	▼33
Washington, DC	Rain	▲45	▼41

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:49 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.0 Feet
9:08 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
3:15 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.7 Feet
8:37 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:38 AM	6:23 PM
Thursday	6:37 AM	6:23 PM
Friday	6:37 AM	6:24 PM
Saturday	6:36 AM	6:24 PM
Sunday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:36 PM	7:21 AM
Thursday	8:23 PM	8:01 AM
Friday	9:10 PM	8:39 AM
Saturday	9:57 PM	9:18 AM
Sunday	10:44 PM	9:57 AM

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 22, 2016

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA2924	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA2922	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA2921	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA2920	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA2928	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA2926	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA2921	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA2921	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ628	3:50am	7:40am	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	1, 3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA2924/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA2924/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	Daily via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2922/193	8:40am	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:30pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:50pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/193	1:30pm	11:10pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA2920/193	2:20pm	11:10pm	2 via GUM-ROR
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2928/193	6:05pm	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	7:20am+1	1, 6 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	9:00am+1	3, 6 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ628/721	3:50am	12:50am	Daily via ICN
UA2922/159	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2921/159	1:30pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/159	2:20pm	10:35pm	3, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA2923	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA2925	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA2921	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA2920	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA2927	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA2929	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA2920	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA2920	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:35am	3:10pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ627	9:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10pm	3:30am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA190/2927	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2929	9:55am	9:20pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2927	10:00am	5:35pm	3 via GUM
UA190/2929	10:00am	9:20pm	3 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ702/627	12:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA2925	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/2925	10:20pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2920	10:20pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2927	10:20pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2929	10:20pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	11:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2920	11:59pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	11:59pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2929	11:59pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/627	2:20pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
UA116/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA116/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA116/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
6:30AM	6:45AM	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Guam speaker welcomes PH President Aquino

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Guam Speaker Judith T. Won Pat welcomes Philippine President Benigno C. Aquino at the A.B. Won Pat International Airport after the latter made a brief stopover in the U.S. territory after attending an Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit in California.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Philippine President Benigno C. Aquino poses with Guam officials led by Gov. Eddie Calvo and Lt. Gov. Ray Tenorio and Philippine Consulate Consul Consulate General Marc De Borja.

HAGÅTÑA, Guam—President Benigno Aquino made a brief stop in Guam early Friday morning upon his return to the Philippines after attending an Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit in California.

He was welcomed by Speaker Judith T. Won Pat, Senator Dennis Rodriguez, Jr., Senator Mary Camacho Torres, and Senator James Espaldon—together with Gov. Eddie Calvo and Lt. Gov. Ray Tenorio, Chief Justice Robert J. Torres, and Phicippine Consulate General Marciano De Borja.

"It was an honor to have the opportunity to welcome President Aquino," stated Won Pat. "He is very humble, and in the short time that I was able to speak with him, he conveyed a deep sense of dedication to serving his people. I certainly hope to work with the government of the Philippines in building our island's ties. I am grateful to Philippine Consulate Consul General Mark De Borja and his office for the invitation." ***(PR)***

Meeting works toward ensuring all births, deaths in the Pacific are counted

NOUMEA, New Caledonia—Registrars, statisticians, and health information specialists from across the Pacific are gathering in Noumea, New Caledonia, this week (Feb. 22-25) to share experiences and lessons on improving civil registration and vital statistics systems and data.

It is the first regional meeting of its kind to bring all three major sectors together within the region, and is an opportunity to share the lessons and experiences from the first five years of the Pacific Vital Statistics Action Plan.

Civil registration is essential to provide timely data for development, to plan services such as schools and infrastructure, support human and child rights and to promote good governance and accountability.

Vital statistics and cause of death data collected through a routine registration system is also essential to be able to effectively identify and respond to key health issues in the Pacific region, such as non-communicable diseases.

The meeting on "Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in the Pacific Islands-Standards, best practice and lessons learnt" is organized by the Brisbane Accord Group of agencies, in particular the Pacific Community (SPC), the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); with the United Nations Statistics Division.

Hosted by SPC, the meeting will draw on the expertise of nine technical agencies and regional networks, and will include participation from 22 Pacific Island countries and territories.

Since the beginning of the Pacific Vital Statistics Action Plan in 2011, there has been significant progress, with countries such as Nauru, American Samoa and Cook Islands having recently released detailed analysis reports; new computerized systems being introduced in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, and a significant increase in birth registration completeness in countries including Kiribati, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.

This has been complimented by the strong political commitment in the region to improving Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) through both the Ministers of Health meetings, and more recently the adoption of the Asia Pacific Regional Action Framework for Improving CRVS and the Asia-Pacific CRVS Decade (2015-2024).

"Despite the progress to date, more needs to be done to ensure that everyone is included 'in the picture' of our region," the Pacific Community's Deputy Director-General, Cameron Diver, said while addressing the meeting at SPC headquarters.

"This week's meeting provides an opportunity for island states to join together to build on the commitments made to improving CRVS in the region and to share knowledge and experiences on how to do this," Diver said.

For more information on the workshop proceedings or Pacific Vital Statistics Action Plan, please visit: www.pacific-crvs.org; for more information on the UN Decade for CRVS or Asia Pacific Regional Action Framework please visit www.getinthepicture.org. ***(SPC)***

Vanuatu and Pacific Community seal sustainable development collaboration

PORT VILA, Vanuatu—To mark the beginning of a five-year sustainable development partnership between the Government of Vanuatu and the Pacific Community (SPC), a Memorandum of Understanding was signed today by Foreign Minister, the Hon. Bruno Leingkon Tau, and the Pacific Community Director-General, Dr. Colin Tukuitonga.

The development priority areas for Vanuatu outlined in the agreement include the productive sectors, including coastal fisheries, agriculture and forestry, as well as development statistics.

"A key focus for the government is to ensure there is a substantial effort made towards more youth engagement and gender equality, incorporated into the work to promote and improve productive sectors," Minister Leingkon said.

"We're pleased the Pacific Community shares our vision in ensuring sustainable development in Vanuatu," the Minister said.

The agreement will not only focus on achieving priorities outlined in the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2030 and by the Port Vila-based Melanesian Spearhead Group, but will also review the relevance of existing programmes.

"We're delighted to continue to assist Vanuatu through capacity building and technical expertise, and this agreement is similar to one we signed with the Melanesian Spearhead Group," Tukuitonga said during a two-day visit to Vanuatu.

"SPC's integrated approach to development programming, combined with ongoing valued support from our development partners, will help address Vanuatu's specific priority development areas over the next five years," Tukuitonga said.

The collaboration is based on a genuine spirit of collaboration, whereby both parties agree to complement each other's efforts and embrace the contributions of other partners to enrich the development outcomes.

It also places an emphasis on improving service delivery, developing new policies consistent with the move to sustainable development, reviewing achievements towards the Millennium Development Goal, and preparing Vanuatu for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. ***(SPC)***

CUC sets new water hours for Chalan Monsignor Martinez

As the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. continues leak detection efforts in the As Lito area, customers along Chalan Monsignor Martinez will have new water service hours two days this week.

As Lito currently receives water between 6am and 12pm, daily. This week, water service hours on Wednesday, Feb. 24, and Thursday, Feb. 25, will change from 5am to 11am to provide the CUC leak detection a better opportunity to pinpoint underground line breaks.

By pressurizing the As Lito water lines an hour early, the leak detection ground miking equipment won't detect as much background noise. For more information, please contact the 24-hour CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or visit www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/ for the latest updates.

CUC is a non-profit autonomous agency of the CNMI government. The utility provides electric power, water and wastewater services to the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. ***(PR)***

Millions in tax refunds yet to be paid in Guam

HAGATNA, Guam (AP)—Millions of dollars in tax returns have not been paid out in Guam.

The *Pacific Daily News* reports the government began paying out refunds at this time last year.

More than 11,000 returns have been filed with the Guam Department of Revenue and Taxation. The 1,800 that have been processed represent about $8.57 million in refunds.

Department of Administration director Kathrine Kakigi told lawmakers in January that the government was dealing with a cash crunch.

A law requires Guam to put some income tax revenue into an account set aside for refunds. The account's current balance is $235.

The governor has been unsuccessfully fighting a court order requiring all error-free refunds be paid within six months of filing.

An official in west Guam says people will get their refunds.

Fiji cyclone death toll reaches 29 after island leveled

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Ten people have died on a single small island in Fiji as the total death toll from a powerful cyclone climbed to 29, officials said Tuesday.

Government spokesman Ewan Perrin said the death toll on Koro Island had reached double figures and that most buildings there had been heavily damaged or flattened.

He said a relief vessel with about 30 people aboard had arrived at the island with medical supplies, food and water, and teams were helping build temporary shelters for the 4,500 residents.

"It's one of the worst hit," Perrin said.

He said officials also have fears about nearby Taveuni Island, home to about 12,000 people, because they've managed to have only limited contact with people there.

Winds from Cyclone Winston, which tore through the Pacific Island chain Saturday and early Sunday, reached 177 miles (285 kilometers) per hour, making it the strongest storm in Fiji's recorded history.

Getting emergency supplies to the group's far-flung islands and remote communities has been the Fiji government's top priority.

Alice Clements, a spokeswoman for UNICEF, said the aerial footage coming in showed a corridor of destruction over places like Koro Island.

AP

In this Sunday, Feb. 21, 2016 aerial photo supplied by the New Zealand Defense Force, debris is scattered around damaged buildings at Susui village in Fiji, after Cyclone Winston tore through the island nation.

"The imagery is heartbreaking," she said. "You're looking down and expecting to see a village and instead you're seeing a field of debris."

She said one priority is to ensure children get back to school because studies have shown it helps them recover faster emotionally.

United Nations Under-Secretary-General Stephen O'Brien said in a statement he was concerned by the devastating impact the cyclone was having on Fiji.

"Whole villages have been destroyed, homes and crops have been damaged, power lines have been cut and more than 8,100 people are currently sheltering in over 70 evacuation centers," O'Brien said.

O'Brien said Fiji was leading the response and had asked for international help. Australia has so far pledged 5 million Australian dollars ($3.6 million) in aid and New Zealand has pledged 2 million New Zealand dollars ($1.3 million).

Perrin said France, the U.S. and China have also provided or pledged support. He said relief agencies, including Oxfam and the Red Cross, have been helping with humanitarian efforts and that the Fijian government has set up a disaster relief fund.

Home to 900,000 people, Fiji has more than 100 inhabited islands, and authorities are having difficulty communicating with some of the more remote islands in the wake of the cyclone.

Phone communications have been rapidly restored in many areas but in other areas the damage was severe and would take longer to fix, Perrin said.

He said the electricity network across Fiji remained patchy, and in some cases power had been deliberately cut to prevent further damage. He said clean water was also a challenge, and people were being asked to boil their water, treat it with chemicals or drink bottled water.

Cyclone Winston: Pacific Community offers assistance to Fiji

SUVA, Fiji—The Pacific Community (SPC) is offering its prayers and practical assistance as Fiji rallies to assess the scale of the impact of tropical cyclone Winston.

The Pacific Community Director-General, Dr. Colin Tukuitonga, has written to Fiji's Foreign Affairs Minister, the Hon. Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, offering to deploy specialist SPC teams to assist the Fiji Government's response, based on the nation's needs in the wake of the powerful cyclone.

Tukuitonga said the 390 SPC staff based in Fiji are believed to be safe, although the homes of several employees are known to be damaged, with one colleague in the Lautoka area losing the roof off his home.

SPC's offices in Fiji—in Suva, Lautoka and Labasa—are closed today.

"As per our long-standing practice in this disaster-prone region, the Pacific Community stands ready to deploy disaster response teams and provide technical assistance as needed to reinforce the Fiji Government's capacity," Tukuitonga said.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the government and people of Fiji, including our many colleagues and development partners who are based there," Tukuitonga said.

While the extent of damage at SPC offices and project sites is yet to be determined, Tukuitonga confirmed the globally-significant tissue culture collections at SPC's Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees in Suva are unaffected, as the building is intact and there is a back-up generator maintaining the temperature in the storage laboratories. ***(SPC)***

UOG: Control techniques for little fire ants are working

The little fire ant (LFA) is still steadily spreading across the island bringing its painful sting to all it encounters. The good news is the treatments being used to control the ants are working and entomologists at the University of Guam, Western Pacific Tropical Research Center (WPTRC) are playing an active role in executing these treatments.

Dr. Ross Miller is finding success with his team's implementation of LFA control techniques. The techniques were developed in Hawaii and adapted for use on Guam. Several of the sites, where multiple treatments were applied for one year, are now declared free of little fire ants. One site located in Yigo sits next to the home of the island's only animal shelter, Guam Animals in Need.

G. CURT FIEDLER

Entomologists at the University of Guam Western Tropical Research Center continue developing techniques to control and eradicate the invasive little fire ant.

With funding from USDA CAPS and U.S. Forest Service, Miller's team performed surveys at each treatment site to determine the magnitude and range of the infestation. The area is then treated with low toxicity granular bait called Siesta. A second insecticide that interrupts the growth cycle of the ants is sprayed on tree trunks and leaves. One week later the team conducts a follow-up survey to check the effectiveness of the treatments, and then six weeks later both insecticides are re-applied and the site is again surveyed. Each site received a total of eight repeat treatments over a period of more than a year. "The only complication we have found is getting 12 straight hours without rainfall to apply the insecticides," said Miller. "The treatment is working beautifully, but the ants continue to spread because of the indiscriminate dumping of LFA infested garbage and green waste."

After Typhoon Dolphin blew over the island in May 2015 there was a massive amount of green waste generated. Government of Guam officials opened a temporary green waste collection site at Oka point. Since that time, little fire ant has been found in the area around the collection site.

Miller's lab is also involved with surveillance on the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota for coconut rhinoceros beetles and little fire ants to keep these invasive insects from hitching a ride from Guam to other islands. His team is using the locally created Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle DeFence Trap to monitor for the presence of rhino beetles.

Working with students in Costa Rica with the Native American and Pacific Islander Research Experience (NAPIRE) program, Miller has the opportunity to study little fire ants in their home environment. When comparing population density of LFA in Guam and in Costa Rica, Guam had a much higher density. This may be due to greater numbers of competitors and predators in LFA's home range. This research highlights the vulnerability of islands when invasive species are accidentally introduced.

The impact of little fire ant on theecosystems of Guam is not yet fully understood, but the work of WPTRC researchers proves that this invasive insect can be controlled. For more information on little fire ant, please visit http://cnas-re.uog.edu/lfa/. ***(PR)***

Business

Uber forced to drive defensively, again, after mass shooting

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—As authorities look for the reasons why a Michigan man allegedly embarked on a mass shooting spree over the weekend, the ride-hailing service Uber is addressing his record as a driver with the company.

Critics say the episode could bring more attention to concerns about the fast-growing service, which has been dogged by controversy on the road to becoming one of the most valuable privately funded companies in the world.

Jason Dalton, the man arrested in connection with the Kalamazoo rampage that left six people dead, is a former insurance adjuster who had been working as a driver for Uber's ride-hailing service. Authorities were investigating unconfirmed reports he may have picked up passengers in the hours before and after the rampage on Saturday.

San Francisco-based Uber has been one of the most successful tech industry startups in recent years, as millions of customers have flocked to use its smartphone app for hailing rides in 380 cities around the globe. The company says its drivers are independent contractors who use the app to help find customers and schedule trips.

Private backers have poured more than $10 billion into the company, under terms that value the business at more than $50 billion—making it the biggest in a recent wave of tech firms that have grown to enormous size without taking the traditional step of selling stock to the public.

But since its launch in 2009, Uber has faced criticism for a pricing formula that can send rates skyrocketing at times of high demand, and for sidestepping regulators and licensing requirements in some cities where it's opened for business. And after several reported assaults by drivers, critics have also complained the company should do more to screen drivers and guard passengers' safety.

Some of that criticism has been raised by competitors and regulators who argue that Uber's success has come as the company has expanded while seeking to avoid the strict licensing and permit requirements that traditional tax companies face.

"I do think this is an outrageous incident that's going to draw more attention to this issue," said Dave Sutton, spokesman for "Who's Driving You," an organization backed by Uber's competitors in the taxi and limousine industry, which has fought the company's expansion.

Authorities identified Dalton as a 45-year-old from Kalamazoo Township who police said had no criminal record. They said victims of the shootings in and around the city of Kalamazoo had no apparent connection to him or to each other.

Uber spokeswoman Nairi Hourdajian confirmed Dalton had driven for Uber. Hourdajian wouldn't say whether he was picking up fares for the ride-sharing service Saturday night.

Authorities, however, were investigating a Facebook post which indicated the suspect was driving erratically around the time of the shootings and may have picked up at least one Uber fare while authorities were looking for him, according to Kalamazoo County Prosecutor Jeff Getting.

Uber said Sunday that it has offered to assist authorities in their investigation. In a statement, Uber chief security officer Joe Sullivan said the company is "horrified and heartbroken at the senseless violence."

AP

In this Dec. 16, 2015, file photo, a man leaves the headquarters of Uber in San Francisco. Ride-hailing company Uber received a complaint about erratic driving by Jason Dalton Saturday night, but says it never could have predicted the violent acts Dalton allegedly committed.

Some victims in mass shooting support efforts to hack iPhone

WASHINGTON (AP)—Some victims and affected families in the mass shootings in southern California will file court papers in support of a U.S. magistrate judge's order that Apple Inc. help the FBI hack into a locked iPhone as part of the terrorism investigation, a lawyer and others said Monday.

A Los Angeles attorney, Stephen Larson, said he represents at least several families of victims and other employees he declined to identify but who were affected by the shootings. He said the U.S. attorney in the case, Eileen Decker, sought his help. Larson said he will file a brief supporting the Justice Department before March 3.

The victims "have questions that go simply beyond the criminal investigation ... in terms of why this happened, how this happened, why they were targeted, is there anything about them on the iPhone—things that are more of a personal victim" view, Larson said.

George Valasco, whose 27-year-old niece Yvette Velasco was killed in the shooting, said his brother—Yvette's father—agreed to be named in the brief.

"Frankly it's difficult to understand why Apple would not jump at the opportunity to help uncover whatever information the phone may contain," according to a family statement. "We're not talking about an ordinary case here—this is an act of terrorism, where 14 Americans lost their lives, and many more were seriously injured. It's potentially a matter of national security, where other Americans' safety could be at risk."

An appeal by victims in the case gives the Justice Department additional support in a case that has sparked a national debate over digital privacy rights and national security interests. Magistrate Judge Sheri Pym in California ordered Apple last week to assist investigators by creating specialized software that would let the FBI rapidly test random passcode combinations to try to unlock the iPhone and view data stored on it.

Zuckerberg to press on with Internet access despite setback

BARCELONA, Spain (AP)—Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg vowed Monday to press on with his 3-year-old effort to bring the developing world online, even after Indian regulators banned one of the pillars of the campaign.

He said the banned service, Free Basics, was only one program in his Internet.org campaign, so he could proceed with other initiatives. Indian regulators banned Free Basics this month because it provided access only to certain preapproved services—including Facebook—rather than the full Internet.

"Facebook isn't a company that hits a roadblock and gives up," Zuckerberg said at the Mobile World Congress wireless show in Barcelona, Spain. "We take the hits and try to get better."

Though Zuckerberg termed the regulatory defeat "disappointing for the mission and a major setback," he said every country was different, and "the model that has worked in one country may not work in another."

This was his third appearance at the Barcelona show to promote Internet access to everyone in the world. He has argued that online connections can improve lives and fuel economic development.

To achieve that goal, Zuckerberg has high-flying dreams for someday providing Internet connections through a network of drones, satellites and lasers. Zuckerberg said Monday that Internet.org would launch its first satellite over Africa this year and "we are about to test flying Internet drone solar planes that can fly three months a year."

BUSINESS BRIEFS

IEA: Slashed spending by drillers could lead to price spike

HOUSTON (AP)—Oil prices will more than double by 2020 as current low prices lead drillers to cut investment in new production and gradually reduce the glut of crude, the head of a group of oil-importing countries said Monday. Fatih Birol, executive director of the International Energy Agency, said oil would rise gradually to about $80 a barrel. Oil prices shot to more than $100 a barrel in mid-2014 before a long slide sent them crashing below $30 last month. "There was a rise, there will be a fall, and soon there will be a rise again," Birol said on the opening day of a huge energy-industry conference that will feature addresses by the oil minister of Saudi Arabia, the secretary-general of OPEC, the president of Mexico, and U.S. Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz.

Starbucks changes rewards program; small spenders lose

NEW YORK (AP)—Starbucks is changing the terms of its rewards program so that people who spend around $5 or less per visit won't get as many freebies. The Seattle-based coffee chain says its loyalty program will award stars based on the dollars spent starting in April. Currently, people earn a star for each transaction, regardless of how much they spend, and get a free food or item of their choice after earning 12 stars. People will now have to earn 125 stars for a free item, with each dollar spent being worth two stars—meaning they have to spend $62.50 to get their free item. That means people who stick with options like plain coffee are losing out.

Senate clears way for approval of new FDA commissioner

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Senate has cleared the way for approval of President Barack Obama's nominee for commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration. Senators voted 80-6 Monday to end a Democratic filibuster of Obama's pick to head the agency. Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders and Sens. Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Ed Markey of Massachusetts had held up the nomination of Dr. Robert Califf in an effort to force the agency to be tougher on prescription drug prices and the abuse of opioid painkillers. A confirmation vote could come as early as Tuesday.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
16,620.66	1,945.50	4,570.61
+228.67	+27.72	+66.18
1.40%	1.45%	1.47%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.3809	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7702	Philippine Peso	47.6343
British Pound	0.7093	Indian Rupee	68.6419	Singapore Dollar	1.4043
Canadian Dollar	1.3715	Indonesian Rupiah	13411	South Korean Won	1233.06
Chinese Yuan	6.5297	Japanese Yen	112.2662	Swiss Franc	0.9953
Euro	0.9063	Malaysian Ringgit	4.1992	Taiwan Dollar	33.178
		New Zealand Dollar	1.4945	Thailand Baht	35.7255

Nation

Obama sends Congress $1.9B request to combat Zika virus

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama Monday sent lawmakers an official $1.9 billion request to combat the spread of the Zika virus in Latin America and the U.S.

He is also requesting flexibility to use a limited portion of leftover funds provided in 2014 to fight Ebola to take on Zika, which has been linked to severe birth defects. Top House Republicans told the White House last week that the quickest way to get the money to fight Zika would be to use some of the approximate $2.7 billion that had been designated for the Ebola crisis but remains "unobligated." Consideration of a stand-alone Zika request could prove cumbersome, especially in a combative election year.

Zika has been spreading through countries such as Brazil, but is also being transmitted by mosquitoes in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa. Travelers have also returned to the continental U.S. infected with the virus.

So far, concerns over Zika have been far more restrained than experienced during the Ebola scare. Voters' fears regarding Ebola were seen as hurting Obama's party in the 2014 midterm landslide.

Obama said Monday during a meeting with the nation's governors that he hoped to work with them in guarding against the outbreak of the disease. Obama said the $1.9 billion he is requesting would include investments in research into new vaccines and better diagnostic tools, and more support for Puerto Rico and territories where there are confirmed cases.

Obama stressed that the symptoms from contracting the Zika virus are mild and most folks don't even realize they have it.

"But as all of you have read, the possible connection between Zika, birth defects and other serious health problems means that we've got to take precautions, particularly with respect to women who are pregnant or are trying to get pregnant," Obama told members of the National Governors Association. "So we're going to be fighting this disease at every level with every tool at our disposal."

Money would go to fight Zika in U.S. territories and states such as Florida and Texas that are at risk of mosquito-borne transmission of the virus; to help to battle its spread overseas; and to develop a vaccine.

Obama telegraphed the requested earlier this month.

AP

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of NIH/NIAID, right, and Dr. Anne Schuchat, Principal Deputy Director of the CDC, participate in a briefing in the Brady Press Briefing Room of the White House in Washington, Monday, Feb. 8, 2016.

Rubio builds momentum, Cruz campaign shows signs of struggle

ELKO, Nevada (AP)—Marco Rubio amassed increasing support for his candidacy while Ted Cruz's campaign showed signs of struggle as Republican presidential candidates crisscrossed Nevada on Monday on the final day of campaigning ahead of the state's GOP caucuses.

Cruz told reporters Monday he has asked his campaign spokesman, Rick Tyler, to resign for tweeting a story that falsely alleged Rubio insulted the Bible.

"We are not a campaign that is going to question the faith of another candidate for president," he said, calling Tyler "a good man" and noting that he deleted the tweet once he discovered it was false.

Tyler did not return telephone, text or email messages left by The Associated Press seeking comment.

It's not the first time that Cruz's campaign has been accused by rivals of using questionable tactics. Cruz apologized to GOP hopeful Ben Carson earlier this month after his campaign promoted a news story suggesting that Carson was getting out of the race. Cruz's campaign has also acknowledged creating a website that used a computer program to create a fake picture of Rubio shaking hands with President Barack Obama.

Speaking during a campaign stop in Elko, Nevada, earlier Monday, Rubio criticized Cruz for the incident and asked whether Cruz would fire anyone involved.

"It's every single day something comes out of the Cruz campaign that's deceptive and untrue, and in this case goes after my faith," Rubio told reporters when asked about the incident. "I guess one of their spokespersons apologized, and I accept their apology."

Republican front-runner Donald Trump lashed out at Cruz over Twitter on Monday, saying that Cruz "has now apologized to Marco Rubio and Ben Carson for fraud and dirty tricks. No wonder he has lost Evangelical support!" He reiterated his calls for disqualifying Cruz because of "his fraudulent win in Iowa."

Trump was scheduled to hold two rallies in Nevada—one in Elko and another later in Las Vegas. Trump's campaign manager Corey Lewandowski said Monday that the billionaire businessman has been seeking advice from former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani as he gradually expands his tight inner circle.

Gun maker seeks dismissal of lawsuit over Newtown shooting

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. (AP)—Lawyers for a gun maker and families of some Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre victims squared off in a Connecticut courtroom Monday over whether a federal law prevents the families' wrongful death lawsuit targeting the AR-15 rifle used to kill 20 children and six adults in the 2012 shooting.

Judge Barbara Bellis in Bridgeport heard arguments but didn't issue a ruling Monday. She said she would rule within the next two months on whether the lawsuit should go forward toward trial or be dismissed.

The families of nine children and adults killed at the Newtown school and a teacher who survived the attack say the AR-15 is a highly lethal military weapon that should not be sold to the public. They're suing Freedom Group, the Madison, North Carolina, parent company of Bushmaster Firearms, which made the AR-15 used in the school shooting.

Lawyers for Freedom Group said the company is protected by a 2005 federal law that shields gun manufacturers from most lawsuits over criminal use of their products. They said Congress passed the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act after determining such lawsuits were an abuse of the legal system.

Joshua Koskoff, a lawyer for the victims' families, said their lawsuit is believed to be the first to be filed under an exception listed in the federal law that allows litigation against companies that know, or should know, that their weapons are likely to be used in a way that risks injury to others. The families are seeking unspecified monetary damages and hope the lawsuit persuades gun companies to not sell AR-15s to the public.

"This is an instrument of war designed for the battlefield that is marketed and sold to the general public," said Mark Barden, whose son Daniel was killed in the massacre. "We're just asking for accountability."

Nicole Hockley, whose son Dylan died in the shooting, said the plaintiffs are hoping to prevent AR-15s from being used in other mass shootings.

"He chose the AR-15," she said of Sandy Hook shooter Adam Lanza, "because he was aware of how many shots it could get out, how lethal it was, the way it was designed, that it would serve his objective of killing as many people as possible in the shortest time possible."

A mayor wants space where addicts can inject heroin safely

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP)—The mayor of Ithaca wants his city in upstate New York to host the nation's first supervised injection facility, enabling heroin users to shoot illegal drugs into their bodies under the care of a nurse without getting arrested by police.

The son of an addict who abandoned his family, Ithaca Mayor Svante Myrick is only 28 years old, but knows intimately how destructive drugs can be. As he worked his way from a homeless shelter into the Ivy League at Cornell University and then became Ithaca's youngest mayor four years ago, Myrick encountered countless people who never got the help they needed.

"I have watched for 20 years this system that just doesn't work," Myrick explained in an Associated Press interview. "We can't wait anymore for the federal government. We have people shooting up in alleys. In bathroom stalls. And too many of them are dying."

Describing his proposals to the AP ahead of a formal announcement planned for Wednesday, the mayor said creating a place where addicts can inject heroin safely is a key part of a holistic approach to drug abuse that Ithaca will be rolling out, one that treats addiction more like a public health issue than a problem for the criminal justice system to solve. Nurses or physicians could quickly administer an antidote if a user overdoses, while addicts also could get clean syringes and be directed to treatment and recovery programs, he said.

Myrick expects supervised injection sites to be a hard sell in Albany, let alone in Washington, D.C., but his political sensibilities reflect what polls show is a growing belief among younger Americans that the war on drugs announced in 1971 by President Richard Nixon has failed.

"I think for a lot of people this is going to sound like a weird concept—'Aren't you just encouraging them to use drugs?'" he said. "But I think it's more possible now than at any time in our history. The opioid epidemic is affecting more people and we know we can't wait any longer for the federal government to do something."

Asia

Tensions rising on DMZ, N. Korean officer tells AP

PANMUNJOM, North Korea (AP)—Tensions have increased significantly along the Demilitarized Zone since North Korea's recent nuclear test and rocket launch, a North Korean military official told The Associated Press on Monday, adding that while he could not comment on operational details, "the reality is that it is touch and go."

Though parts of the world's most fortified border can seem like a tourist trap, drawing throngs of camera-happy visitors on both sides every year, to the military-trained eye the Cold War-style standoff along the 257-kilometer (160-mile) DMZ—established when the 1950-53 Korean War ended in an armistice, not a peace treaty—is an incident waiting to happen.

That's now truer than ever, the North Korean officer said, as tensions are escalating between Pyongyang, Seoul and Washington. Thousands of U.S. troops are deployed in South Korea and units based around the DMZ have the motto "Be Ready to Fight Tonight."

"People come here and they think it's like a resort. But if you know it better, you know how dangerous it is," Lt. Col. Nam Dong Ho of the North Korean People's Army said in Panmunjom, the truce village where the armistice was signed.

Nam said tensions have increased significantly since the nuclear test in January and rocket launch earlier this month. "Something could happen at any time," he said.

To stand on the North Korean side of the Demilitarized Zone is almost otherworldly.

After crossing through military checkpoints and passing roadside concrete structures rigged to detonate and keep any vehicles from passing—defenses that are also common in the South—the air is peaceful and fresh, and birds can be heard chirping as they fly over a carefully manicured landscape dotted with rock monuments and meticulously maintained historical buildings.

But closer to the Demarcation Line that marks the actual border, soldiers stand rigidly on guard, armed and intimidating, often just a few steps away from their South Korean counterparts.

On Monday, the surreal feeling at the Demarcation Line was heightened by the absence of anyone—soldiers or civilians—visible on the South's side.

US wants leadership role for India in Asia-Pacific

NEW DELHI (AP)—India's leadership is sorely needed in the Asia-Pacific region, and the United States is prepared to cooperate with India "as never before" on the high seas, a top U.S. diplomat said Monday.

The U.S. ambassador to India, Richard Verma, said the cooperation was not aimed at China, even though Washington sees the presence of Chinese missiles in the South China Sea as evidence of the militarization of the area.

He also said U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter will return to India in April for an unprecedented third visit in less than a year.

"I hope that in the not-too-distant future the United States and Indian navy vessels steaming together will become a common and welcome sight throughout Indo-Pacific water," Verma told a group of Indian journalists.

The ambassador said ties between the militaries of the United States and India were becoming increasingly close.

"Our offers to provide Indian forces with Apache attack helicopters—the most advanced helicopter in the U.S. inventory—Chinook heavy lift helicopters and M777 howitzers are akin to our defense relationships with our closest NATO allies," he said.

China accuses the U.S. of militarizing the Asia-Pacific region, saying patrols by U.S. Navy vessels and military aircraft have escalated tensions.

Other countries in the region have welcomed the U.S. presence as China claims the South China Sea as its domain.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Army: Indian forces kill 3 militants to end 3-day standoff

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—Indian forces on Monday killed the last three militants who had holed up for three days in a building in India's portion of Kashmir, the army said, raising the standoff's toll to nine dead. The troops recovered a huge quantity of arms and ammunition as they secured each floor of the five-story government building, said Lt. Gen. Arvind Dutta, a senior army officer. Five soldiers and one civilian had been killed over the weekend. Loud explosions and fierce exchange of gunfire rattled the building during the 50-hour standoff that was the longest-running attack in five years in the disputed Himalayan region's main city of Srinagar or its outskirts. Fire was also seen in the building, but the flames subsided after a while.

Singapore deports 4 Indonesians for links to IS

SINGAPORE (AP)—Singapore said Tuesday that it had deported four Indonesians it says were on their way to Syria to join the Islamic State group. The Ministry of Home Affairs said the four "were deported to Indonesia after investigations revealed that they had plans to make their way to Syria to fight for ISIS." ISIS is another acronym for the Islamic State group. "Singapore authorities informed their Indonesian counterparts before the deportation," the ministry said in a statement to The Associated Press. The local Straits Times newspaper reported that one of the four was a 15-year-old boy who was detained Sunday while attempting to enter Singapore from Johor in Malaysia.

New Zealand man pleads guilty to throwing goop at lawmaker

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—A New Zealand man whose 14-year-old son was killed in a deadly Christchurch earthquake pleaded guilty Tuesday to assaulting the lawmaker responsible for quake recovery efforts after throwing goop at him. John Howland, 41, told reporters he'd thrown the mix of chocolate, vinegar and other ingredients at Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee because he was angry at the government for not taking better care of victims' families. He faces a maximum penalty of one year in jail. Howland threw the mix at the end of a service attended by hundreds of people to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the magnitude-6.1 quake that killed 185 people on Feb 22, 2011.

World

US-Brazil teams investigate link between Zika and microcephaly

JOAO PESSAO, Brazil (AP)—Joint teams of U.S. and Brazilian health workers will fan out across one of Brazil's poorest states Tuesday in search of mothers and infants for a study aimed at determining whether the Zika virus is causing babies to be born with unusually small heads.

AP

A municipal health worker sprays insecticide in a junk yard to combat the Aedes aegypti mosquito that transmits the Zika virus in Joao Pessoa, Brazil, Monday, Feb. 22, 2016.

Brazil's health minister, Marcelo Castro, says he is "absolutely sure" mosquito-borne Zika is responsible for a spike in cases of the rare birth defect microcephaly, which sees babies born with small heads and brains and can cause severe developmental problems. But with scant scientific literature published on the matter, some doctors in Brazil and elsewhere say there is not yet enough scientific data to prove the connection.

Jointly run by the Brazil's Health Ministry and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the study is intended to fill that vacuum by comparing babies with microcephaly and their mothers to babies without the condition.

The popular "understanding is that Zika virus (behind the microcephaly spike). How much of that is Zika virus is really one of the important goals of this study," said Erin Staples, a Colorado-based epidemiologist who heads the CDC contingent in Paraiba state. "I do believe there is something occurring that is unique and knowable, but we really need to understand better, mostly so we can prevent this from happening to other generations."

US, Russia agree on Syria cease-fire plan; questions remain

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP)—The United States and Russia have agreed on a new cease-fire for Syria that will take effect Saturday, even as major questions over enforcing and responding to violations of the truce were left unresolved. Syria's warring government and rebels still need to accept the deal.

The timeline for a hoped-for breakthrough comes after the former Cold War foes, backing opposing sides in the conflict, said they finalized the details of a "cessation of hostilities" between President Bashar Assad's government and armed opposition groups after five years of violence that has killed more than 250,000 people.

The truce will not cover the Islamic State group, the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front and any other militias designated as terrorist organizations by the U.N. Security Council. But where in Syria the fighting must stop and where counterterrorism operations can continue must still be addressed. And the five-page plan released by the U.S. State Department leaves open how breaches of the cease-fire will be identified or punished.

The announcement came after Presidents Barack Obama and Vladimir Putin spoke by telephone Monday, capping weeks of intense diplomacy to stem the violence so that Assad's government and "moderate" rebel forces might return to peace talks in Geneva. A first round of indirect discussions collapsed almost immediately this month amid a massive government offensive backed by Russian airstrikes in northern Syria.

Greece braces for growing number of stranded migrants

IDOMENI, Greece (AP)—Greece's government said Monday that it expects a growing number of stranded refugees and other migrants because the European Union is failing to deal with unilateral actions and an "outburst of scare-mongering" by individual member states.

Macedonia further restricted at the border with Greece over the weekend, sparking protests by Afghan nationals at a border crossing.

Macedonia imposed the restrictions at the weekend after Austria put a cap on transit and asylum applications.

The action—blocking Afghans from crossing the border and generally restricting access—left thousands of migrants stranded in Greece, at the border and at the port of Piraeus, near Athens, where regular private services to the border were suspended.

"Once again the European Union voted for something, it reached an agreement, and a number of countries who are lacking the culture of the European Union—including Austria, unfortunately—violated this deal 10 hours after it was reached," Ioannis Mouzalas, a deputy minister for migration, told state-run ERT television.

"The European Union cannot act in a united way to this outburst of scare-mongering from various countries. And that is creating problems, and these problems also involve our country."

Macedonian officials said Monday they restricted the entrance of Afghan migrants from Greece following similar action from Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia, who in recent days have returned to Macedonia more than 600 Afghans deemed to be economic migrants.

Macedonia's ombudsman Ixhet Memeti told private TV Telma that about 1,500 more are expected to be deported to Macedonia soon from countries further north on the Balkan corridor, which migrants follow to reach wealthier European countries.

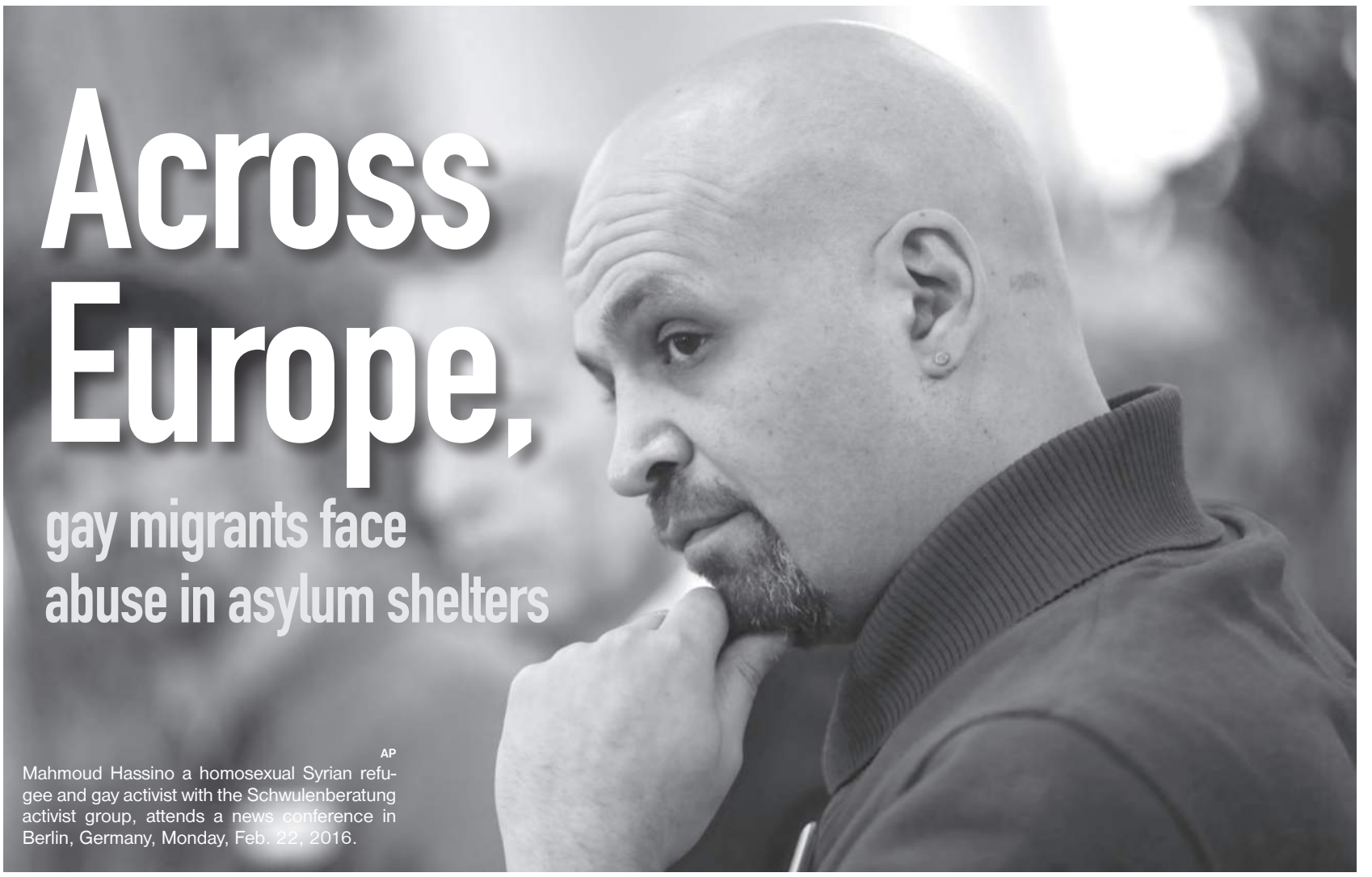
Focus

KIRSTEN GRIESHABER,
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITERS

MIKE CORDER,
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITERS

Across Europe,

gay migrants face abuse in asylum shelters



AP
Mahmoud Hassino a homosexual Syrian refugee and gay activist with the Schwulenberatung activist group, attends a news conference in Berlin, Germany, Monday, Feb. 22, 2016.

BERLIN (AP)— Alaa Ammar fled Syria to escape not just civil war but also the threat of persecution as a gay man. Yet when he arrived in The Netherlands last spring, he did not find the safe haven he craved.

He and four other gay travelers had to face newly arrived asylum seekers at a migrant center in the remote northern town of Ter Apel.

"After five minutes, they started looking. After 10 minutes, they started to talk. After one hour, they came to us," said Ammar, a slender 28-year-old in tight jeans and with a diamond-like stud in each ear. "After three hours, they started fighting with us."

Across Europe, gay, lesbian and transgender migrants say they suffer from verbal, physical and sexual abuse in refugee shelters, and some have been forced to move out. The AP found out about scores of documented cases in The Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Denmark, Sweden and Finland, with the abuse usually coming from fellow refugees and sometimes security staff and translators.

The cases suggest a possible cultural clash: Many migrants are coming from conservative Muslim countries where homosexuality is taboo into European societies that are more open to it. In Syria, for example, homosexuality is illegal, and the militant Islamic State group has killed more than 30 gays in Syria and Iraq over the past two years, activists say.

A similar debate, this time over cultural attitudes toward gender, was sparked after young men assaulted and robbed hundreds of women in several German cities on New Year's Eve. Police described the men as of North African and Arabic origin.

The number of migrants accused of gay abuse are just a tiny fraction of the hundreds of thousands of refugees streaming into Europe. However, most abuse is likely not reported because of European privacy laws and the stigma felt by gay migrants, and there is no official tally across the continent.

In Germany, the Lesbian and Gay Federation counted 106 cases of violence against homosexual and transgender refugees in the Berlin region from August through the end of January. Most of the cases came from refugee centers, and 13 included sexual abuse.

Joerg Steinert, head of the federation in Berlin-Brandenburg, said refugees have been asking gay groups for help all over the country, reluctant to approach police for fear of jeopardizing their asylum applications. Last year, the federation placed 50 people in private homes because the migrant centers were too dangerous.

"These asylum shelters are law-free areas," he said. "When I come to our office on Monday morning, there's usually a bunch of refugees waiting outside in the hallway who need help immediately."

Charities and private shelter operators say they've simply been too overwhelmed by the huge influx of migrants to attend to some refugees' special needs. Masses of people often live in one big hall, without lockable rooms or gender-separated washrooms.

In Berlin, where four hangars at the former Tempelhof airport were turned into a reception center for 2,100 people, four cases of gay abuse were reported. Maria Antonia Kipp, spokeswoman for private center operator Tamaja, said it's very difficult to create safe spaces for homosexuals when hundreds of bunk beds are separated only by thin wooden boards.

"When we see a dangerous situation or people tell us about it, we'll get the people out and transfer them to smaller shelters," she said.

The German Red Cross said it had a code of conduct banning violence at its shelters. And the Arbeiterwohlfahrt, or Worker's Welfare charity group, said it is trying to create safe spaces in new centers but cannot implement the highest standards it would like.

"We've been somewhat overrun by reality," said spokeswoman Mona Finder.

Some critics say it is up to the German government to protect migrants. But last month, a proposal to increase the security of asylum shelters was taken out of a government bill, despite official reprimands from the European Commission that Germany is not implementing EU safety guidelines.

Without the government, the protection of gay migrants has largely fallen to rights groups and local communities. On Tuesday, gay rights group Schwulenberatung Berlin will open a new home with 122 beds for gay refugees in cooperation with the city of Berlin and another shelter with 10 beds was recently opened in Nuremberg. Berlin has also appointed a counselor as contact person for the registration of gay and transgender migrants.

Schwulenberatung Berlin's Mahmoud Hassino said the new Berlin shelter would be a big improvement for gay, transgender and lesbian refugees.

"Gay refugees live in constant fear in the big shelters," said the 40-year-old Syrian refugee.

Hassino came to Germany in 2014 and had to move out of a Berlin shelter himself because of the hostility of fellow refugees.

"Even if they don't get abused right away, they're always afraid their identity will be revealed and then they'll be targeted," he said.

The situation for homosexual refugees is difficult all over Europe. In Spain, for example, two migrants from Cameroon and a third from Morocco were physically abused after their sexual orientation was discovered by others at shelters, according to the Pueblos Unidos nonprofit. The men now have asylum petitions pending before the Spanish government citing their homosexuality as a reason why they deserve refugee status, the nonprofit said.

In Sweden, a court sentenced an asylum seeker to five months in prison last summer for making death threats, along with spitting in the face and grabbing the throat of a fellow refugee in a center in Jonkoping. When the victim collapsed onto the floor, the attacker kicked him unconscious. Witnesses and a surveillance video backed the claims.

The motive was the victim's homosexuality. The attacker was "outraged that Sweden protects homosexuality and all should be killed by slaughtering," according to court documents.

In Finland, cases of gay harassment and downright abuse have also been recorded at refugee centers, according to SETA, a nationwide lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender group. As a result, some of the centers have separated a secure section for those afraid of sexual harassment.

Other migrants have contacted SETA after fleeing their designated refugee center because of abuse. Earlier this month, a Finnish court gave an asylum seeker a three-and-half-year prison sentence for raping another migrant man at a southern Finnish center.

In Denmark, there have been at least 10 cases of harassment, according to Mads Ted Drud-Jensen from the LGBT Asylum group. He stressed that those figures represent only victims who have been in contact with the group.

"Stepping out of the closet may be hard to do, and not everyone is talking to us," he said.

In the Netherlands, a Dutch human rights group reported earlier this month on regular abuse of gays and lesbians at a large camp that can house up to 3,000 asylum seekers near the city of Nijmegen. The group, The College for Human Rights, said one asylum seeker "has repeatedly found excrement and food in his bed. He is threatened and abused by fellow residents."

The asylum seeker, whose identity was not disclosed, said he feared for his safety because some other refugees carried knives. The report said he often found notes in his bed such as "kill gay" and "we don't want gay in the camp."

When Ammar reported abuse in Ter Apel, he and other gay refugees were put up on the floor of a restaurant for a night. Then they were transferred to another shelter in Apeldoorn.

There too, Ammar said, three fellow refugees attacked him and another man in the communal washroom and slashed them with a knife.

"You could see from their eyes that they wanted to hurt me," he said.

Again, Ammar was transferred, back to a caravan in Ter Apel. Employees with the COA asylum organization advised them to close the doors and windows, he said, but other asylum seekers "opened the windows and said bad things to us."

Spokesman Jan-Willem Anholts said COA does not keep records of complaints of gay abuse, but does have "protective" measures for people at risk. Anholts also raised concerns that creating safe houses for specific groups could lead to a type of "segregation" in Dutch society.

It was only after Ammar received asylum and moved in with a private host in Amsterdam a few weeks ago that he started to feel really safe.

"Who wouldn't like Amsterdam?' Ammar said as he looked carefully left and right before crossing roads—already seasoned at watching out for speeding bicycles in the Dutch capital. "People don't care if I'm gay or not. I can scream 'I'm gay!' and they will say, 'Welcome.'"

Good Housekeeping

LIVING SMART: What are the pros and cons of brick homes?

By JASON HARGRAVES
ANGIE'S LIST

MCT
Brick remains a popular option for home exteriors nationwide.

Brick homes have been a standard of quality in the building industry for years, but as newer home exterior products emerge, homeowners can now choose from a wide range of exterior materials.

So, is brick the right choice for your home's exterior?

Well, it's certainly popular.

According to a study by the National Association of Home Builders, 34 percent of respondents ranked brick as their top choice for home exteriors, while vinyl siding came in at 21 percent, stone at 16 percent, stucco at 12 percent and wood at 7 percent. In fact, respondents said they were willing to pay an additional $7,500 for brick.

If you're unsure about brick — regardless if you're searching for a home or building new — consider the pros and cons of brick exteriors.

What are the benefits of brick?

Aside form its popularity, there are other positive aspects of choosing brick.

Low-maintenance: Brick itself is a relatively low-maintenance building material, thanks to its durability and color retention.

Unlike vinyl siding or wood, it won't rot or dent and doesn't need to be painted after installation.

Eco-friendly: Brick is made from some of the most abundant materials on earth — clay and shale.

Bricks can also be repurposed for landscaping projects, such as retaining walls or walking paths, ground up for sub-base materials or chipped into smaller pieces for permanent landscaping mulch.

Weather and fire resistance: Bricks are noncombustible and don't aid in the spread of fire. They can even help contain a fire to a particular room or portion of a house.

Bricks also add an extra layer of storm protection. Studies have shown how brick exteriors can withstand impact from flying debris at far greater wind speeds than other common exterior materials.

Due to these safety features, many insurance companies offer lower homeowners insurance rates for homes with brick exteriors.

What's the downside of using brick?

Brick is more expensive: Bricks tend to be more expensive than other exterior products, such as vinyl siding.

According to the Brick Industry Association, a 2,500-square-foot brick home typically costs 6 to 7 percent more than vinyl.

Color limitations: Bricks come in a variety of colors, depending on their composition and the temperature at which they were made, but choices are limited compared to siding or stucco.

True, brick can be painted, but it's often painstaking process because each groove and side of a brick has to be covered, says Stephen Popov, managing partner of The Painting Penguin in Norcross, Georgia.

It's easy to miss spots with the paint if you choose to paint the brick yourself, he adds.

Repointing: While bricks are highly durable, the mortar used to attach them together (pointing) can be more troublesome.

Pointing can wear out over time due to exposure to the elements, especially when installed improperly. Repointing may be needed over time to replace the mortar and ensure the integrity of your brick structure.

YOUR PLACE
Kitchens top to-do lists for many homeowners

By ALAN J. HEAVENS
THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

You are where you eat, I suppose, and that's why kitchens perennially seem to be the focus of home-renovation spending.

That's also what LG Electronics, which makes kitchen appliances, among other things, found in a survey of 1,022 Americans earlier this fall.

Among their plans for renovating, the survey found, homeowners are resolving to make improving their kitchens a priority, with more than half of future renovators revealing that they have their sights set on improving the heart of their homes.

Furthermore, 46 percent of the responding homeowners said the kitchen is the No. 1 room on which they would be most likely to splurge.

Top motivations for those planning to renovate their kitchens are to improve the rooms' design and aesthetic appeal (26 percent) and making them more functional (25 percent), rather than trying to increase the overall value of their homes (11 percent).

Other survey highlights:

Two in five homeowners would like their kitchens to be more functional (40 percent). Many want them to be bigger (47 percent), have more counter space (44 percent), include additional cabinets (37 percent), and accommodate more people (33 percent).

Three in 10 said their kitchens are the areas of their homes where guests tend to gather to socialize and the places they themselves gravitate to even when they are not eating or cooking.

More than half of homeowners who planned to renovate their kitchens had their eyes set on changing their appliances. And of those respondents looking to renovate, many said they would like appliances that are professional-style, built-in or counter-depth, premium, disguised, or timeless-looking.

Nearly four in five homeowners said they would give up something substantial for a year to have their ideal kitchens, including their next vacation, Saturdays off, date nights, and Web surfing.

In my house, we already have a great kitchen, and I'm not giving anything up, especially vacations.

On vacation, you see, you can always eat in someone else's kitchen.

Contact Alan J. Heavens at aheavens@phillynews.com or write him at The Philadelphia Inquirer, Box 8263, Philadelphia PA 19101. Volume prohibits individual replies.

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING ONE

Chewy Peanut Butter Cookies

These cookies work best with supermarket brands of peanut butter. The amount of artery-clogging trans fats in commercial peanut butter is small. In fact, you'd have to eat about 40 tablespoons to get 1 gram of trans fat.

2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup butter or margarine (2 sticks), softened
1 cup creamy peanut butter
1 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 tablespoons dark corn syrup
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 large eggs

1. Heat oven to 375 F.

2. On waxed paper, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.

3. In large bowl, with mixer at medium speed, beat butter, peanut butter and sugars until creamy, occasionally scraping bowl with rubber spatula. Beat in corn syrup, vanilla, then eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. At low speed, gradually add flour mixture; beat just until blended, occasionally scraping bowl. Cover and refrigerate dough 30 minutes for easier shaping.

4. Shape dough by rounded measuring tablespoons into 1 1/2-inch balls. Place balls, 2 inches apart, on ungreased large cookie sheet. With floured tines of fork, press and flatten each ball, making a crisscross pattern. Bake cookies 12 to 13 minutes or until pale golden. Transfer cookies to wire rack to cool. Repeat with remaining dough. Makes about 5 dozen cookies.

* Each serving: About 100 calories, 6g total fat (3g saturated), 2g protein, 11g carbohydrate, 0g fiber, 16mg cholesterol, 85mg sodium.

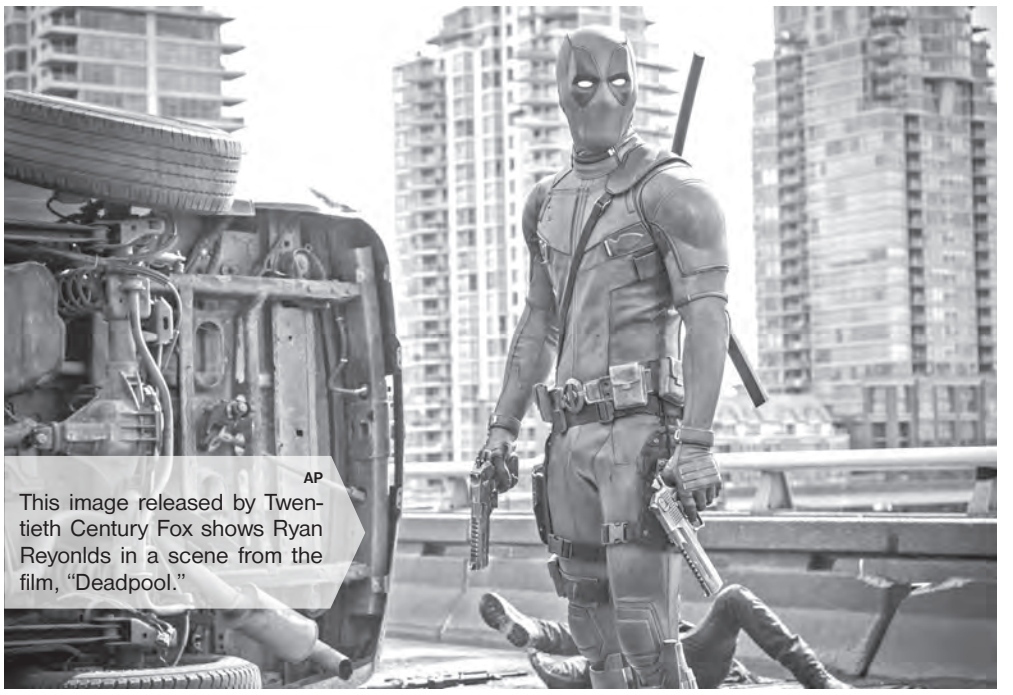
Life & Style

Box Office Top 20: 'Deadpool' stays on top with $56.5M

NEW YORK (AP)—The R-rated comic book adaption "Deadpool" remained on top at the box office, earning $56.5 million in its second weekend and bringing its two-week total to $236.9 million.

The 20th Century Fox release, starring Ryan Reynolds, is on course to become one of the most lucrative R-rated films of all time. It easily trumped three smaller new wide releases.

The faith-based tale "Risen" opened with $11.8 million. The 1600s Puritan horror thriller "The Witch" opened with $8.8 million, the best weekend yet for the indie distributor A24. And Focus Features' Jesse Owens biopic "Race" debuted with a disappointing $7.4 million.



AP

This image released by Twentieth Century Fox shows Ryan Reyonlds in a scene from the film, "Deadpool."

The top 20 movies at U.S. and Canadian theaters Friday through Sunday, followed by distribution studio, gross, number of theater locations, average receipts per location, total gross and number of weeks in release, as compiled Monday by comScore:

1. **"Deadpool,"** 20th Century Fox, $56,470,167, 3,722 locations, $15,172 average, $236,865,054, 2 weeks.
2. **"Kung Fu Panda 3,"** 20th Century Fox, $12,516,601, 3,448 locations, $3,630 average, $117,121,185, 4 weeks.
3. **"Risen,"** Sony, $11,801,271, 2,915 locations, $4,048 average, $11,801,271, 1 week.
4. **"The Witch,"** A24 Films, $8,800,230, 2,046 locations, $4,301 average, $8,800,230, 1 week.
5. ***"How To Be Single,"*** Warner Bros., $8,202,430, 3,357 locations, $2,443 average, $31,746,063, 2 weeks.
6. **"Race,"** Focus Features, $7,353,922, 2,369 locations, $3,104 average, $7,353,922, 1 week.
7. **"Zoolander 2,"** Paramount, $5,455,344, 3,418 locations, $1,596 average, $23,673,355, 2 weeks.
8. ***"Star Wars: The Force Awakens,"*** Disney, $3,907,295, 1,618 locations, $2,415 average, $921,713,590, 10 weeks.
9. **"The Revenant,"** 20th Century Fox, $3,866,741, 1,939 locations, $1,994 average, $165,183,291, 9 weeks.
10. **"Hail, Caesar!"** Universal, $2,745,705, 1,726 locations, $1,591 average, $26,258,850, 3 weeks.
11. **"Ride Along 2,"** Universal, $2,229,825, 1,210 locations, $1,843 average, $86,515,305, 6 weeks.
12. **"The Choice,"** Lionsgate, $1,802,224, 1,817 locations, $992 average, $16,619,702, 3 weeks.
13. **"The Lady In The Van,"** Sony Pictures Classics, $1,504,739, 540 locations, $2,787 average, $3,817,926, 6 weeks.
14. **"The Boy,"** STX Entertainment, $1,436,592, 977 locations, $1,470 average, $33,360,570, 5 weeks.
15. **"The 5th Wave,"** Sony, $1,312,378, 850 locations, $1,544 average, $31,956,244, 5 weeks.
16. **"The Finest Hours,"** Disney, $1,010,546, 946 locations, $1,068 average, $25,473,815, 4 weeks.
17. **"Mei Ren Yu (The Mermaid),"** Sony, $985,052, 35 locations, $28,144 average, $985,052, 1 week.
18. **"Busco Novio Para Mi Mujer,"** Lionsgate, $902,457, 357 locations, $2,528 average, $902,457, 1 week.
19. **"The Big Short,"** Paramount, $887,975, 432 locations, $2,055 average, $67,135,716, 11 week.
20. **"Brooklyn,"** Fox Searchlight, $766,626, 443 locations, $1,731 average, $35,364,727, 16 weeks.

'Indiana Jones' cinematographer Douglas Slocombe dies at 103

By JAKE COYLE
AP FILM WRITER

Douglas Slocombe, the chameleonic British cinematographer who filmed the Nazi invasion of Poland, the adventures of "Indiana Jones" and the madcap farce of Ealing comedies, has died. Slocombe was 103.

His daughter, Georgina Slocombe, said Slocombe died early Monday in a London hospital. A recent fall led to setbacks that ended with his death, she said.

"He said the other day that he loved every day of his work, every day on the set," said Georgina Slocombe, a photographer. "He really enjoyed his work and his life."

Slocombe was one of British cinema's most acclaimed cinematographers. He shot some 80 films, working with directors as varied as George Cukor, John Huston, Norman Jewison and Roman Polanski. His career began with the famed Ealing black comedies of the late 1940s and early '50s, and ended with three "Indiana Jones" films for Steven Spielberg.

"Dougie Slocombe was facile, enthusiastic, and loved the action of filmmaking," Spielberg said. "Harrison Ford was Indiana Jones in front of the camera, but with his whip-smart crew, Dougie was my behind the scenes hero for the first three Indy movies."

The London-born, France-raised Slocombe was nominated for three Academy Awards and won three from the British Academy of Film and Television Arts for 1974's "The Great Gatsby," 1963's "The Servant" and 1977's "Julia." The British Society of Cinematographers gave him a lifetime achievement award in 1995.

AP

In this Nov. 13, 2011 file photo, British cinematographer Douglas Slocombe arrives for a tribute to Oscar-winning actress Vanessa Redgrave in London.

Former Miss America contestant dies week after car crash

CAMDEN, N.J. (AP)—A former Miss America contestant critically injured when her car spun off a wet highway and crashed into trees last week died on Monday.

Ex-Miss New Jersey Cara McCollum, who worked at a TV station and was known for her efforts in public service, died with her family by her side in a hospital operating room, and her organs were donated, the family said.

"We've prayed constantly for a miracle, and we believe God has answered our prayers," the family said on Facebook. "Although it's not the miracle that we first envisioned, it's a miracle nonetheless."

McCollum was 24 years old and lived in Margate. Her family posted a video of her performing a version of a "Cups" cover made popular by Anna Kendrick in the film "Pitch Perfect."

The song includes the lyrics "you're gonna miss me when I'm gone" and was performed by Miss New York Kira Kazantsev when she won the Miss America pageant in September 2014. McCollum competed in the previous year's pageant after winning the 2013 Miss New Jersey title.

AP

In this Sept. 3, 2013 file photo, Miss New Jersey Cara McCollum waves as she walks on a runway as Miss America contestants arrive in Atlantic City, N.J.

McCollum, a Forrest City, Arkansas, native, graduated from Princeton University and was an anchor on "SNJ Today," a news show serving the southern Jersey area on Channel 22 in Cumberland County. Her death also was confirmed by the station's chief operating officer, Frank DiMauro.

Former Assemblywoman Caroline Casagrande said McCollum was "an incredibly giving human being."

Casagrande said McCollum volunteered to help an institute that Casagrande ran for high school students interested in public service. The students soon adopted a project of McCollum's that presented books as birthday presents to first- and second-graders in Asbury Park.

Game show says rules preventing contestants from Canada

NEW YORK (AP)—"Jeopardy!" host Alex Trebek, a famous Canadian, apparently won't be seeing many of his countrymen on the popular game show for the foreseeable future.

The show said Canadians were precluded taking last month's online test that is a pipeline for "Jeopardy!" contestants because of a change in that country's online privacy laws. Producers said Monday they were working to clear up the issue for future tests.

Canadians have traditionally been included in the American version of "Jeopardy!," which airs in both countries.

"We have had many Canadians as contestants throughout the history of the show, and we hope that will continue, because Canadians make great game show contestants," Trebek, a native of Sudbury, Ontario, said in a statement. The issue came to light because of a story in the Ottawa Citizen.

"Jeopardy!" producers were not made available for an interview on Monday, and said in a statement that "ever-changing and complex" international laws governing the sharing of information over the Internet precluded the Canadians' participation.

That left unclear exactly how the test runs afoul of Canadian laws. Michael Geist, a University of Ottawa expert in online privacy, told the National Post that anti-spam legislation was the only major legal change in this area recently, and there was nothing in that law that would prevent Canadians from taking an online test no matter where it originates.

Canadian contestants are still appearing in this season's shows because they are drawn

Camille Cosby is deposed in Massachusetts defamation case

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (AP)—Bill Cosby's wife, an enigmatic figure who has publicly stood by her husband despite the dozens of sexual assault allegations against him, was deposed Monday in a defamation lawsuit filed against him by seven accusers.

The deposition, believed to be the first she has given since dozens of women came forward to accuse him of sex assault, was given under heavy security at the Springfield Marriott. Hotel staff cordoned off the area of the hotel near the conference room where Cosby gave her deposition and later pulled heavy draperies across the hallway so no one could see the door to the room.

Depositions in civil cases are typically given in private, with only the people being deposed, their lawyers and a stenographer in the room. Written transcripts of depositions are generally sealed from public view because they are considered discovery materials shared between lawyers on both sides. But depositions can sometimes become public when they are attached to support a motion in the case.

AP

This Oct. 26, 2009 file photo, comedian Bill Cosby, left, and his wife Camille appear at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts before Bill Cosby received the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor in Washington.

Camille, 71, has been married to Bill for 52 years. She has also been his business manager.

After numerous women went public with sexual assault allegations against her husband, Camille Cosby issued a supportive statement, calling him "a kind man, a generous man, a funny man, and a wonderful husband, father and friend."

"He is the man you thought you knew," she said in December 2014.

She also suggested that her husband, not the women, was the party being harmed.

"None of us will ever want to be in the position of attacking a victim," she said. "But the question should be asked -- who is the victim?"

Lawyers for the Cosbys have argued that she does not have any information on the accuracy of the women's claims and that her conversations with her husband are confidential under the Massachusetts marital disqualification rule. They attempted to quash the deposition.

Black actors ready for Chris Rock to shake up Oscar show

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—Guests at the first American Black Film Festival Honors are ready for Chris Rock to shake up the Oscars.

Don Cheadle, Ice Cube, Adina Porter and Michelle Mitchenor are among the entertainers eager to hear the comedian's take on Hollywood's diversity crisis when he hosts Sunday's Academy Awards.

"I think this could be a watershed moment for what he does, and there's nobody better suited to do it, so I hope he goes in," Cheadle said Sunday at the inaugural ABFF awards ceremony, where he accepted the Excellence in the Arts award. "I hope he skewers everybody, which is what he's good at doing."

The ABFF Honors were produced in conjunction with Black Entertainment Television to recognize film and TV productions featuring African-Americans as stars or lead creative talents.

"Given the atmosphere of the lack of diversity for the Oscars, I think this is the perfect opportunity to celebrate the filmmakers who are brown, black, who are female or diverse in one way or the other or the Oscars won't," said actor Joe Morton. "So this is our Oscar."

The American Black Film Festival will celebrate its 20th anniversary in June. The organization and BET created the ABFF honors this year to celebrate performances overlooked by traditional awards shows.

"When you feel that a section of the art or artists are not being appreciated, there's a need for an award show like this," actor O'Shea Jackson Jr., a star of "Straight Outta Compton," said Sunday. "We gotta get our piece of this art their credit due and award shows like this, programs like BET, they help further our people in this creative landscape of cinema."

Some high-profile black entertainers, including Jada Pinkett Smith, have called for a boycott of the Academy Awards after its second consecutive year of all-white acting nominees.

Actress Salli Richardson-Whitfield said she's conflicted about watching the ceremony but wants to support Rock as host.

Taylor Swift donates $250K to Kesha amid fight with Dr. Luke

NEW YORK (AP)—Taylor Swift is giving some financial assistance to fellow pop star Kesha as she fights to get out of a contract with a record producer she has accused of sexually assaulting her.

A representative for Swift confirmed Sunday that Swift had donated $250,000 to Kesha in a "show of support" to help her in her legal fight against megahit producer Dr. Luke.

On Friday, the "Tik Tok" singer sobbed in court as a judge denied her bid to get out of her contract with Dr. Luke, who has worked with artists including Britney Spears, Katy Perry and Nicki Minaj.

AP

Pop star Kesha leaves Supreme court in New York, Friday, Feb. 19, 2016.

Dr. Luke has denied Kesha's allegations, and his lawyers reiterated his views in a statement Monday. Attorney Christine Lepera called Kesha's accusations "outright lies that have been advanced to extort a contract renegotiation and money."

While Friday's court decision is not the final judgment in the case, the ruling has led to an outpouring of support for Kesha on social media from other celebrities, including Kelly Clarkson, who once worked with Dr. Luke.

Dr. Luke, whose real name is Lukas Gottwald, posted denials of Kesha's claims on Twitter.

"I didn't rape Kesha and I have never had sex with her," one of his posts read. "Kesha and I were friends for many years and she was like my little sister."

A rep for Kesha did not immediately return a message seeking comment on Swift's donation. Kesha's attorneys declined to comment on Lepera's statement Monday.

Racist language draws physical reaction from offended friend

DEAR ABBY: A foreign friend used the "n" word while commenting about an employee at a hotel we were staying in. After he said it a second time, I slapped him and told him that word was never acceptable, regardless of the reason.

I feel bad about hitting him, but entirely justified in motive and intent. I really can't think of another, more effective way of registering how offended I am in a situation like this. Should I apologize? Should it be a qualified apology?

I tried to explain the complex racial history of the U.S. and why the word was so hurtful, but he seemed disinclined to understand. What is the right way to react in such a situation?

ANONYMOUS IN THE USA

DEAR ANONYMOUS: You should not have let the first remark go without speaking up. The right way to respond to the person's racist comment would have been to say that it offended you and you would prefer not to hear that kind of language from him again. Physical violence is not the correct way to get a point across.

If you must associate with this person, apologize for flying off the handle. Otherwise, avoid him.

DEAR ABBY: I'm in love with two men. My husband, "Victor," and I have been together for nine years and were married last year. The other man in my life, "Wade," was my boss, and we've been seeing each other for two years.

They are polar opposites and make me happy in different ways. I was engaged and planning my wedding when Wade and I started our relationship. I chose to marry Victor for emotional stability and because we had built a life together. I can't imagine a life without him. At the same time, I can't imagine not being with Wade.

If I stop seeing Wade, I know I won't be happy and he'll always be on my mind. I will always wonder about what could have been. If I divorce my husband, I'll break his heart, and it won't be easy.

Last week Wade demanded that I decide between him and my husband. He wants an exclusive relationship with me. I'm in a panic because I can't decide, but I know I will lose Wade if I don't do it soon. I need advice because I don't know which way to go.

STUCK AT A CROSSROADS IN FLORIDA

DEAR STUCK: You chose to marry Victor because you wanted emotional stability, and you had built a life together. Obviously, that isn't enough for you, or you wouldn't be cheating with Wade. If what you really want is a marriage filled with passion, tumult and the possibility of infidelity, by all means choose your former boss. That way, you won't be bored, and Victor will then be free to find a loving, faithful wife who appreciates what he has to offer.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

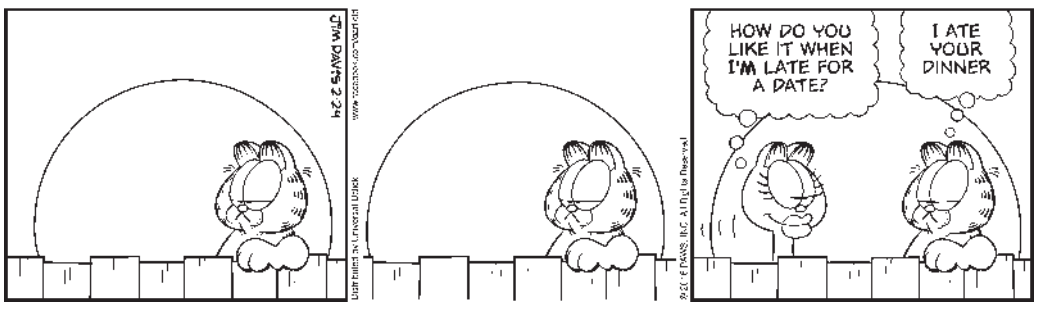
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

CALVIN, YOUR MOTHER AND I HAVE DECIDED TO GIVE YOU AN ALLOWANCE.
IT'S IMPORTANT THAT ONE LEARNS THE VALUE OF MONEY.
MONEY! HA HA HA! I'M RICH! I'M RICH! I CAN BUY OFF ANYONE! THE WORLD IS MINE!
POWER! FRIENDS! PRESTIGE!
I BLEW IT AGAIN, DEAR!
I CAN BUY IT ALL! I'M FREE! HA HA HA HA!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

MY VIDEO'S A HIT!
WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO WATCH YOU DRINK COFFEE?
MAYBE IT'S SOOTHING OR SOMETHING.
SO GOOD.
COUGH COUGH OW! OH, HOT! HOT! COUGH! COUGH!!
OKAY, THE CHOKING PART WAS KIND OF FUNNY.
YEP. THAT'S SOME OF MY BEST WORK.
SHUPPP

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

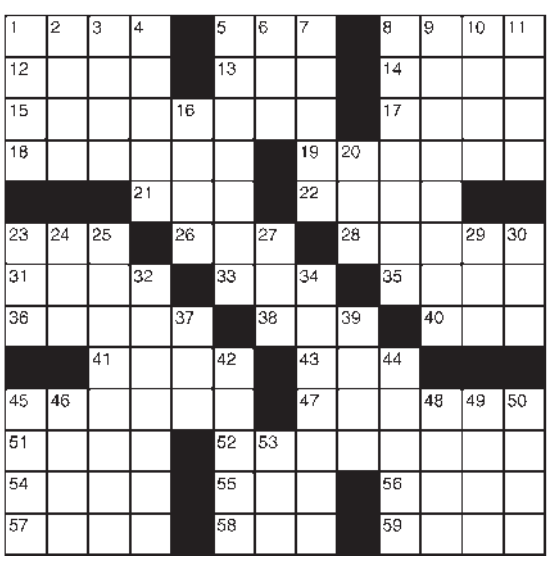
ACROSS
1 High tennis shots
5 Tours season
8 Eye layer
12 "The Time Machine" people
13 Edge
14 Tablet
15 Stellar musician
17 Venus de Milo's lack
18 Dairy case buy
19 Body art
21 Omega preceder
22 Off-white
23 Off-roader (Abbr.)
26 Revue segment
28 "Madam Secretary" star Téa —
31 Big gulp
33 Rainbow shape
35 Continental currency
36 Imam's holy book
38 Deviate off course
40 — Salvador
41 Sport shirt brand
43 Life story
45 Ohio port city
47 Irks
51 Slightly
52 Small rectangular spinet
54 Catcher's aid
55 Leading lady?
56 Earthen pot
57 Eyelid woe
58 Bygone jet
59 Russian refusal

DOWN
1 Tax
2 Hodge-podge
3 Bjorn of tennis lore
4 Ab exercise
5 Lusty literature
6 "— the season ..."
7 Overact
8 Cornered, so to speak
9 Chaste
10 Ticklish Muppet
11 To boot
16 — Major
20 Oft-torn knee part, for short
23 Request
24 Pair
25 Manly vigor
27 Attempt
29 Gun lobby org.
30 Charged bit
32 Common newspaper name
34 Joel Grey musical
37 Affirmative action?
39 Pegasus appendage
42 Pacifists
44 Leek's kin
45 Skye caps
46 R.I.P. notice
48 Unique
49 Harvard rival
50 Venetian-blind part
53 Hosp. hookups

Solution time: 23 mins.

D	E	N	Y	■	S	R	O	■	S	A	N	S
C	T	C	E	■	H	E	R	■	E	R	I	C
P	A	R	A	K	E	E	T	■	M	A	T	A
E	T	A	■	E	E	K	■	T	I	B	E	T
■	■	■	C	N	N	■	P	A	S	■	■	■
B	O	C	A	S	■	C	H	O	W	D	E	R
A	S	T	I	■	P	A	D	■	E	U	R	O
H	U	B	B	A	P	D	■	W	E	D	G	E
■	■	■	S	P	Y	■	G	O	T	■	■	■
B	A	T	H	E	■	Z	O	O	■	V	W	S
A	G	U	E	■	C	O	L	D	F	E	E	T
N	■	N	E	■	E	L	F	■	A	R	L	O
G	N	A	T	■	L	A	S	■	I	A	D	A

Yesterday's answer 2-24



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: O'Shea Jackson Jr., 25; Billy Zane, 50; Helen Shaver, 65; Edward James Olmos, 69.

Happy Birthday: Prioritize, line up your goals and put together a workable plan that will enable you to achieve what's important to you. Eliminate stress by putting an end to the personal situations that are holding you back. A clear passage is your ticket to a better life. Rid yourself of anything that is no longer good for your emotional, financial or physical well-being. Your numbers are 2, 14, 20, 26, 31, 45, 48.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Stay informed and avoid being put in an awkward position. Know what you want and don't deviate from your plan in order to accommodate someone else. You will end up in a good position if you negotiate on your own behalf. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Steer clear of anyone who is negative or constantly getting in your way. Focus on work and learning through your experiences. Surround yourself with people who are proactive and have something unique to offer. ✪✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Don't leave anything to chance. Put your best foot forward intellectually and physically. How you present what you have to offer will make a difference in the outcome of a competitive situation. Honesty will count. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Take matters into your own hands if you want to control the outcome of a domestic situation. Don't be afraid to take a different route if it will lead to improved relations. Explore possibilities by using your imagination and creativity. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Set your sights on your goal and approach what you want with discipline and an unexpected twist. Be progressive and you will attract interest from a most unusual and accommodating source. Celebrate with someone you love. Romance is featured. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Take note of what everyone around you is doing and pick the best of everything in order to help formulate your own strategy. Don't let negativity or doubt hold you back. Don't let a partnership cost you. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Keep your private affairs to yourself. Stick close to home and make significant changes that will help cut your overhead and ease your financial stress. The changes you make will alleviate a personal problem you have with someone close to you. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): The more unique and eccentric you are, the more interest you will receive from outside sources. Make observations about the way others live, and incorporate what works into your own living arrangement. Be true to what you want. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't make assumptions or take action without thinking. Emotions will escalate if you aren't honest about the way you feel or what you want. Operate fairly and you can please everyone, including yourself. Self-improvement should be a priority. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Search and you will find something you can use to your benefit. Whether it has to do with money, health or an organization you want to do business with, you can come out on top if you use your resources wisely. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Take your time and observe what everyone around you is doing. You don't have to commit to anything until you are ready to follow through with your plans. Put more time and effort into how you look and feel. Put yourself first. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Emotional matters will rise to the surface, disrupting your plans if you aren't quick to find a solution that will prevent setbacks or delays. Make your move and protect your interests. Be open, honest and fair, and you will win. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are creative, sensitive and unpredictable. You are dedicated and appreciative.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		3	1				8	6
7	9				2	5		
8					4			
4					5			
6	5	9			1	7	4	
9			4	8	3			2 4
	8	4				1	5	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/24

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

9	5	4	1	6	7	8	2	3
3	1	6	2	8	9	5	7	4
7	8	2	5	3	4	6	9	1
5	7	8	6	4	1	9	3	2
4	2	3	9	5	8	7	1	6
6	9	1	7	2	3	4	5	8
8	3	9	4	7	2	1	6	5
2	6	7	8	1	5	3	4	9
1	4	5	3	9	6	2	8	7

Difficulty Level ★★ 2/23

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

PHOTO ID Solution: 6 letters

N	C	H	S	T	T	N	E	I	T	A	P	H	D	V
U	O	E	M	E	L	O	O	H	C	S	O	T	A	S
M	M	I	O	L	T	A	G	Y	M	V	L	L	T	T
B	P	G	T	L	B	I	M	U	I	S	I	A	E	A
E	A	H	S	A	E	A	M	I	A	D	C	E	S	T
R	N	T	U	W	C	R	R	R	N	R	E	H	W	U
S	Y	S	C	C	U	I	U	C	E	A	D	E	N	S
C	A	S	E	P	Y	T	F	T	O	P	T	I	N	B
P	A	S	S	P	O	R	T	I	A	D	O	E	A	F
R	S	E	E	L	E	V	A	R	T	N	E	D	D	F
O	N	C	X	Ⓐ	Ⓖ	Ⓔ	S	R	U	N	G	Y	E	A
O	A	E	M	P	L	O	Y	E	E	E	E	I	E	T
F	M	H	T	R	I	B	F	O	E	T	A	D	S	S
G	E	N	D	E	R	R	P	O	R	T	R	A	I	T
D	L	I	B	R	A	R	Y	T	I	T	N	E	D	I

©2016 Universal Uclick www.wonderword.com Download the Wonderword Game App! 2/24

Access, Age, Badge, Barcode, Case, Company, Customs, Date of Birth, Dates, Employee, Expiry, Eyes, Face, Gender, Guard, Gym, Health, Height, Identification, Identity, Laminated, Library, Name, Need, Numbers, Nurse, Passport, Patient, Permit, Police, Portrait, Proof, School, Signature, Staff, Status, Travel, Types, Union, Valid, View, Wallet

Yesterday's Answer: Welded

Treasury 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 or 21 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (Contain 130 puzzles.)

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- Salary: $6.05/hr
- Preferably can speak Japanese language fluently.

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- Full Time with flexible working hours.
- Salary: $6.05/hr
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www.saipantribune.com

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LSG SKY CHEFS is looking for the following positions:

- Cook
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- Sanitation Worker
- Food Server/Kitchen Helper
- Quality Assurance Coordinator
- Customer Service/QA Clerk
- Counter Attendant
- Delivery Driver, Flight
- Assistant Operations Manager

Requirements: Superior Court and District/Federal Court Police Clearances, Health Certificate, and Food Handler's Certificate. Applications are available at the Main Office located on airport road, situated between American Red Cross Office and Historic Preservation Office. **Last day to submit application and requirements is Monday, February 29th, 2016.**

No phone calls please.

SECTION 8 VOUCHER ACCEPTED

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or call 670-233-4348. Applications are being accepted Monday - Friday, 8:30a.m. to 5:00p.m. and on Saturday, 9:00a.m. to 12:00p.m., at Ironwood Community Center on Middle Road, Gualo Rai.

Marianas Medical Center
is seeking for U.S. qualified workers for the following position:

(1) Medical Coder & Biller
Must be a Certified Professional Coder (CPC), or a Certified Professional Coder Apprentice (CPC-A) with at least one (1) year of relevant work experience as a Medical Coder and Biller. Must have the ability to understand and assess medical diagnosis and procedure codes. Must be able to compile data, compute fees and charges and prepare claims and invoices for billing purposes. Must have the ability to work provide education to physicians and other business personnel regarding medical coding.

Position closes at 5:00pm on Friday, March 11, 2016.
Applications are available at the Marianas Medical Center.
Applications should include a resume and evidence of education degree(s) and professional licenses claimed. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Testing may be required for some positions.
Marianas Medical Center is an equal opportunity employer.

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WHATZIT Solution: Dollars and cents

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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 5-day run in both print and online editions, for as low as $30 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$30
• 5-Liner	$24	$45

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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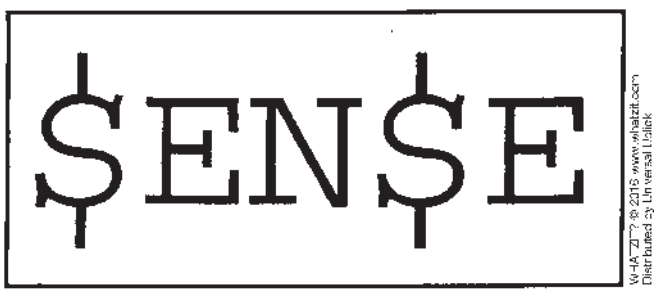

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Curry leads Warriors to 50th win, 102-92 over Hawks

ATLANTA (AP)—The Golden State Warriors reached 50 wins faster than any team in NBA history.

Sounds nice.

Doesn't mean more than that to this group.

With their eyes on more than regular-season records, the Warriors improved to 50-5 as Stephen Curry scored 36 points and Golden State bounced back after squandering a 23-point lead to beat the Atlanta Hawks 102-92 on Monday night.

The Warriors eclipsed the mark set by the 1995-96 Chicago Bulls, who needed one more game to win their 50th. Of course, that's the team Golden State is chasing, moving another step closer to the record 72-10 mark put up by Michael Jordan & Co. at the height of their six-titles-in-eight-years dynasty.

"Fifty wins is great," Curry said, "but we've got to keep plugging away and staying hungry, because nobody wants to talk about that in June."

Curry and the defending NBA champions appeared headed for a rout against the struggling Hawks, pushing out to a 70-47 lead approaching the midway point of the third quarter. Atlanta closed the period on a 28-6 run and grabbed the lead briefly early in the fourth, igniting the sell-out crowd.

But the Warriors would not be denied, bouncing back to hand the Hawks their fourth straight home loss.

"I liked our response," coach Steve Kerr said. "They were on fire in their home building. Everything was going against us, and we maintained our poise and pulled away down the stretch. It was a really good win."

Klay Thompson added 27 points for the Warriors. Both he and Curry knocked down five shots from 3-point range. Draymond Green didn't do much offensively, scoring only six points, but he had 14 rebounds and nine assists.

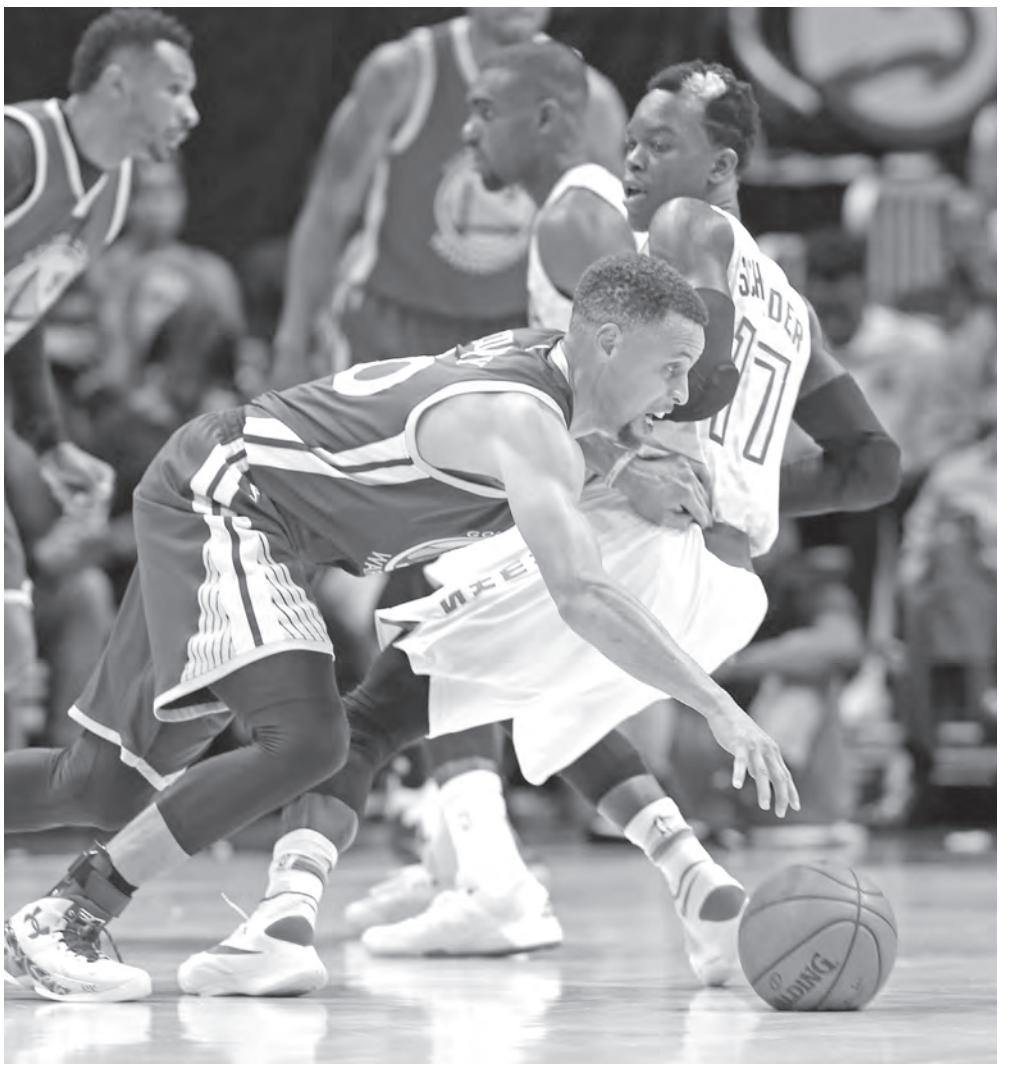
Al Horford led the Hawks with 23 points.

"The third quarter is something we can hopefully build off of," said Atlanta coach Mike Budenholzer, whose team had the top record in the Eastern Conference a year ago but has slipped all the way to sixth this season.

Curry put on a clinic in the first half, thoroughly dominating Hawks point guard Jeff Teague.

Perhaps the best sequence came when Curry swished a towering 3-pointer from the corner, the ball seeming to disappear into the rafters of Philips Arena at the height of its arc. Then, after posing briefly in front of the Golden State bench, he hustled back to the other end to draw an offensive foul on Teague, who looked befuddled by what he was seeing.

At the end of the half, with the clock running down and Teague right in his face, Curry somehow found just enough space to knock down another amazing jumper from the corner, though this one with his foot on the stripe.



AP
Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) drives against Atlanta Hawks guard Dennis Schroder (17) in the first half of an NBA basketball game Monday, Feb. 22, 2016, in Atlanta.

Pistons 96, Cavaliers 88

In Cleveland, Reggie Jackson scored 23 points, Kentavious Caldwell-Pope added 19 and Detroit withstood Cleveland's late comeback to snap a five-game losing streak.

One day after allowing New Orleans center Anthony Davis to score 59 points with 20 rebounds, the Pistons beat the Eastern Conference's top team for the second time this season.

Andre Drummond added 15 rebounds for the Pistons, who let an 18-point lead in the fourth quarter dwindle to six before putting away the Cavs and ending their five-game winning streak.

Kyrie Irving scored 30 and Kevin Love 24 for Cleveland, which had an off night after looking so impressive in a win at Oklahoma City on Sunday. LeBron James scored just 12 points -- 13 below his average -- and went 5 of 18 from the floor, missing all four 3-point tries and committing six turnovers.

Tobias Harris, acquired from Orlando in a trade last week, scored 14 in his first start for the Pistons.

Heat 101, Pacers 93, OT

In Miami, Goran Dragic scored 24 points, Hassan Whiteside finished with 19 points and 18 rebounds, and Miami won its third consecutive game since the All-Star break, rallying from 14 points down to beat Indiana in overtime.

Dwyane Wade added 16 points and Justise Winslow scored 15 for Miami, which won despite shooting only 38 percent. The Heat grabbed 66 rebounds for the second consecutive game after reaching that mark only three times in their first 28 seasons.

Luol Deng added 13 points and 16 rebounds for Miami.

Paul George had 31 points and 11 rebounds for the Pacers, and Myles Turner scored 16. But Indiana's starting backcourt of Monta Ellis and George Hill combined to miss 22 of 24 shots.

Raptors 122, Knicks 95

In New York, Kyle Lowry had 22 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists for his first triple-double of the season, DeMar DeRozan also scored 22 while becoming the winningest player in Raptors history, and Toronto beat New York.

Jonas Valanciunas added 20 points for the Raptors, who won so easily that Knicks interim coach Kurt Rambis changed his mind in the final minutes of the blowout and inserted Jimmer Fredette.

Just signed to a 10-day contract, the former college player of the year made a 3-pointer on his lone shot attempt -- about the only thing Knicks fans had to cheer during the team's 12th loss in 14 games.

DeRozan passed Chris Bosh and Morris Peterson with his 233rd win in six-plus years wearing a Raptors uniform.

Carmelo Anthony had 23 points and 11 rebounds for the Knicks on the fifth anniversary of his trade to New York. Robin Lopez added 21 points and 13 boards.

Timberwolves 124, Celtics 122

In Minneapolis, Karl-Anthony Towns had 28 points, 13 rebounds and four assists, and Minnesota outlasted Boston.

Gorgui Dieng had 17 points and 12 rebounds, and Ricky Rubio gave the Timberwolves 15 points, eight assists, eight rebounds and some terrific defense on Celtics All-Star Isaiah Thomas.

Jae Crowder had 27 points and nine rebounds for the Celtics, who lost on the second night of a back-to-back for the first time in six games. Boston's normally stingy defense gave up 51.8 percent shooting to the Wolves. The Celtics were also outrebounded 51-38, and Marcus Smart missed a 3-pointer at the buzzer that would have won it.

Zach LaVine had 16 points and shot 4 of 5 on 3-pointers, and Andrew Wiggins scored 17 for the Wolves.

Bucks 108, Lakers 101

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 27 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists, and Milwaukee beat Los Angeles in retiring star Kobe Bryant's last trip to the Bradley Center.

Bryant had 15 points in 24 minutes, shooting 3 of 12 from the field and 8 for 9 at the foul line. He was feted with a pregame video tribute by Bucks coach Jason Kidd, who faced the 37-year-old Bryant numerous times during his playing days.

Kidd's young players set the pace and outscored the Lakers 36-17 in the third quarter. All five Bucks starters scored in double figures.

The Lakers lost their sixth straight game.

SIDEBAR NBA buyout has more allure than trade deadline

NEW YORK (AP)—David Lee, Anderson Varejao and Andrea Bargnani have already hit the market. No decision has been made on Joe Johnson.

The buyout deadline is shaping up as more interesting than the trade deadline.

Players who were on a roster this season have to be waived by March 1 to be eligible to play for another team in the playoffs. Once the trade deadline passes, there are always some high-priced veterans who either weren't moved, or were shipped to an undesired location, who negotiate their release to sign with a contender once they've cleared waivers.

Lee had lost a rotation spot in Boston, was waived when the Celtics didn't make any moves before Thursday's deadline, and was signed by Dallas on Monday. Varejao was dealt to Portland when Cleveland acquired Channing Frye and has agreed to a deal with Golden State, a person with knowledge of the deal said Sunday night.

Bargnani was gone shortly after new general manager Sean Marks took over, though it's unclear how much interest, if any, there is in the former No. 1 overall pick.

Johnson could follow him out of Brooklyn if he sought a deal, though he hasn't said if that would interest him. There would surely be interest in the former All-Star if he does become available.

Meanwhile, Pistons coach Stan Van Gundy didn't want to scrap a trade he was convinced would make his team better.

He had no other choice.

Detroit rescinded a three-player, three-team trade with the Houston Rockets and Philadelphia 76ers on Monday, negating it because not all the players involved were cleared medically.

Houston had traded guard Marcus Thornton and center Donatas Motiejunas to Detroit last week for center Joel Anthony and a protected, first-round draft pick this year.

The Rockets also made the move to acquire the draft rights of forward Chukwudiebere Maduabum from Philadelphia.

Van Gundy, who also serves as team president, regretted the deal had to be ditched.

"It's disappointing because we saw the possibilities with Donatas, but I'd do it over again," he said before the Pistons played the Cavaliers. "We did our due diligence and thought it was too much of a risk."

The Pistons did not specify any medical information due to privacy issues.

Van Gundy said Anthony will rejoin the Pistons for Wednesday's home game against Philadelphia.

"I've never been through a situation like this," Van Gundy said. "It's a little bit awkward, but I'm glad it happened with a guy who is such a true professional in Joel."

Thornton averaged 10 points in his first 47 games with Houston. Motiejunas started 62 games for the Rockets last season, but appeared in just 14 games this season after having back surgery. Anthony has been a seldom-used reserve for the Pistons.

The Pistons kept Thornton and Motiejunas out of Sunday's game against New Orleans because the trade had not been finalized.

Motiejunas went through extensive tests in New York, and they weren't finished before the game started. He had season-ending back surgery last April, didn't play again until early December and has been sidelined again since Jan. 1 with recurring pain.

Pacquiao and Bradley's third bout under a cloud

AP
In this April 12, 2014, file photo, boxers Timothy Bradley, left, and Manny Pacquiao, of the Philippines, trade blows during their WBO welterweight title fight in Las Vegas.

MANILA, Philippines (AP) —World boxing star Manny Pacquiao's April 9 bout with Timothy Bradley came under a cloud Monday when the Philippine elections commission was asked to stop the Las Vegas match because it would give the Filipino slugger and senatorial candidate massive publicity.

Former Rep. Walden Bello, also a senatorial candidate in the May 9 elections, said in his petition to the Commission on Elections that allowing the welterweight fight to proceed during the campaign period would violate a law giving candidates equal access to media publicity and a ban on TV and radio programs favoring a candidate.

Bello, a left-wing politician who has not fared well in voter-preference polls ahead of the elections, said the fight, which Pacquiao declared would be his last, should be postponed until after the elections.

Pacquiao, 37, has not fought since losing to Floyd Mayweather Jr. last May in the richest fight ever. Pacquiao reportedly made more than $100 million for that fight, and is guaranteed $20 million to fight Bradley.

The eight-division champion is the Philippines' most famous athlete. He has represented Sarangani province in the Philippines' House of Representatives since May 2010, though he has drawn criticism for seldom showing up for legislative duties.

Pacquiao will face Bradley at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, completing a trilogy between two of the world's top welterweights. Bradley won a hotly disputed split decision over Pacquiao in their first meeting in June 2012, but Pacquiao won by unanimous decision in the April 2014 rematch.

The Bible-quoting Pacquiao has been embroiled in controversy recently for saying that people in same-sex relations are "worse than animals," drawing the ire of netizens and celebrities. He made the comment when asked by a local TV network about his views on same-sex marriage, and video of his response was posted on the network's website last week.

In response to the remark, apparel giant Nike said that it would no longer have any business dealings with Pacquiao, and that that it found his comments "abhorrent."

Pacquiao has apologized to people hurt by his comments and said he respects Nike's decision. But he has stood pat on his opposition to same-sex marriage.

Bello said he was not seeking Pacquiao's disqualification as a senatorial candidate, but was asking the elections commission to take action on the complaint.

"I imagine if they rule in our favor, which I believe they will, then they will have to tell Manny that he would have to comply with it," Bello said, adding that if Pacquiao refuses to comply, disqualification from the election could be a logical outcome.

Bello's petition said that if the spirit and intent of the Fair Elections Act were to be strictly followed, then Pacquiao should be required to go on leave from his profession during the campaign period.

"He has all the rights to exercise his boxing profession after the elections, but to schedule his boxing bout during the campaign period and close to the elections is obviously taking advantage of his personality and his profession, extending undue benefit to his candidacy," the petition said.

It was not clear when the Commission on Elections would decide on the issue.

Half of the 24 seats in the Senate are up for grabs in the upcoming elections. All Senate seats are contested nationally in the Philippines.

NFL teams use scouting combine for more than numbers game

INDIANAPOLIS—Football fans see the NFL's annual scouting combine as merely a numbers game that comes down to the times, jumps and drills they witness on television.

NFL executives are more interested in getting behind-the-scenes answers through medical checks and personal interviews.

It's a delicate balancing act.

"When we finally get the measurables on the underclassmen, when we find out where they are medically, where they are physically, where they are with the interviews, then we'll have a better idea (of where they rank)," ESPN draft analyst Mel Kiper Jr. said on a conference call with reporters Monday, one day before the first players begin arriving in Indianapolis.

Sure, the workouts matter.

Chris Johnson's draft skyrocketed after breaking the combine record with a 4.24-second 40-yard dash in 2008. Cornerback Byron Jones jumped up draft boards—literally—after a record-breaking broad jump of 12 feet, 3 inches last February. Both wound up being first-round picks.

The ramifications for those who underperform or sit out can be damaging, too.

In 2014, quarterback Teddy Bridgewater decided not to throw in Indy, then had a less-than-stellar pro day at Louisville. The result: A player thought to be in the running as the No. 1 overall pick was still available at the end of the first round, a plummet that cost Bridgewater big bucks.

He led the Minnesota Vikings to the 2015 NFC North title this season.

The most costly mistakes come when teams miss red flags.

Two years after Cleveland took Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback Johnny Manziel, his off-the-field problems have led to wide speculation the Browns will release their once future franchise quarterback. San Diego and Oakland found themselves in similar dilemmas with Ryan Leaf and JaMarcus Russell through the years.

That's why longtime NFL decision-makers, such as Hall of Fame executive Bill Polian, insist the most essential component during combine week is what nobody actually sees—real answers to some basic questions from the more than 300 players who show up each February, especially from players who have histories of injuries or off-the-field troubles.

Reigning NL MVP Harper says he's not a leader with Nationals

VIERA, Fla. (AP)—Bryce Harper is a lot of things, including the Washington Nationals' best player and reigning National League MVP.

One thing he's not is the team leader.

Harper arrived at Nationals spring training early and quietly took his place in the corner of the clubhouse with Ryan Zimmerman, Jayson Werth and Danny Espinosa. Even after being a unanimous MVP selection, the 23-year-old Harper would rather leave the leadership responsibilities to those veterans.

"I don't think I'm a leader. I think I'm more just a guy playing the game," Harper said Monday. "I'm still at that stage of where I'm still looking at J-Dub, I'm still looking at Zim to do everything they can to make the best moves for this team and play as hard as I can out there and lead by example. That's the best thing I can do.

There's not a much better example a player can set than Harper did last season. He hit .330, drove in 99 runs and led the NL with 42 home runs, 118 runs scored, a .460 on-base percentage and .649 slugging percentage.

Yet Harper is humble and deferential to older teammates heading into his fifth major league season. He expects Werth, or J-Dub to his teammates, to continue to set the tone in the clubhouse, and he'll continue to do his job at the plate and on the field.

Manager Dusty Baker agrees with that. Baker sees "leadership potential" in Harper but doesn't think the star outfielder is a leader yet.

"How many people are going to follow the youngest kid in the room? And just because you're the most talented doesn't mean that you're the leader," Baker said. "I've always said that leaders are anointed, they're not appointed. People gravitate toward leaders. Ted Williams was the MVP, but I never heard Ted Williams was a leader."

Harper didn't take much time to reflect on 2015 during the offseason, nor was he bragging much about one of the best statistical seasons in recent history. Several months removed from it, Harper said he was humbled to be the unanimous MVP but mentally over it.

"That's all in the past," Harper said. "The 42 homers, .330 average, .4-whatever on-base, I'm not even worried about that now. I'm worried about what we're doing as a team this year."

That's an approach Baker can get on board with. Harper repeatedly mentioned his primary goal for 2016 is to win, which is music to the ears of a 66-year-old still gunning for his first World Series as a manager.

Of course Baker knows that the Nationals' regular-season and playoff hopes hinge greatly on Harper. But he's not setting unrealistic expectations.

"I expect for him to just continue to grow as a player and as a man," Baker said. "How many people 23 years old have been where Bryce has been? Let's not forget he's 23 years old. Where were most of us at 23 years old? I'm not putting any limitations on him; I'm not going to put any pressure on him. I'm just (going to) let him be Bryce."

Harper certainly doesn't plan on setting any limitations for himself. For all his humility about his numbers and role in the clubhouse, Harper echoed his "don't sell me short" comment from a recent radio appearance when asked about potentially being a $400 million player in a few years.

"You can't put a limit on players," Harper said. "You can't put a limit on what they do. If that's on the field, off the field, everything they do. Everybody says the sky's the limit. But we've been on the moon. So you can't really say that."

That extends to the rest of the Nationals. Talking about the team, Harper sure sounded like a leader.

FIFA candidate Champagne files complaint vs UEFA, Asia

ZURICH (AP)—FIFA presidential candidate Jerome Champagne made a formal complaint claiming two rivals supported by continental governing bodies will have an unfair advantage at the vote on Friday.

Champagne urged FIFA election monitors on Monday to cancel 20 extra passes for "observers" from UEFA and seven for the Asian Football Confederation to enter the election hall in Zurich.

In a letter seen by The Associated Press, he wrote that UEFA and the AFC plan "to swamp the Congress hall with confederation employees able to access" voters.

UEFA general secretary Gianni Infantino and AFC President Sheikh Salman are seen as front-runners in the five-candidate contest. The other candidates are former FIFA vice president Prince Ali of Jordan, and South African businessman Tokyo Sexwale.

Champagne, who has run his own campaign, said allowing extra accreditations would "betray a gross violation of the principle of fairness."

"Moreover, the list of names of the persons benefiting from these accreditations reveals the presence of most of the members of these two candidates' campaign teams," wrote the French former diplomat, who was ousted from his job as FIFA international relations director in 2010.

AP
In this January 27, 2016 file photo, FIFA presidential candidate Jerome Champagne attends a mini-forum on the future of FIFA at the EU parliament in Brussels.

Despite 11 years working as a FIFA insider under Sepp Blatter, Champagne has seemed like an outsider in a campaign that includes two members of Middle East monarchies, a commodities tycoon, and the spending power of wealthy European soccer.

Champagne promised to pursue his complaint against "these unfair and undue privileges" if the three-member FIFA election panel did not act by Tuesday.

"The question of the accreditation is in the hands of FIFA," the election committee said in a statement.

Potential breaches of FIFA election rules can be appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

The vote of up to 209 FIFA member federations on Friday will choose a successor to Blatter, as FIFA aims to renew itself after the biggest corruption crisis in its 112-year history.

Meanwhile, Infantino expects more than half of Africa's 54 countries to back him in the FIFA presidential election on Friday.

"I will make an impact (in Africa). I will have a majority of the African votes," the UEFA secretary general said in Cape Town on Monday on a short-notice visit to see where Nelson Mandela was jailed during apartheid.

Infantino's claim, if true, means most African countries will defy their continent's soccer leadership. The Confederation of African Football executive committee has formally endorsed Infantino's main opponent— Sheikh Salman

Infantino said his belief came from private visits to Africa, FIFA's largest confederation by number of voting countries, and a crucial battleground for votes.

"In the discussions I've had with many African (soccer) presidents, I can say I feel very confident," he said.

Infantino visited Robben Island, the prison where Mandela was jailed during apartheid, on the invitation of fellow FIFA candidate Tokyo Sexwale. South African businessman Sexwale, also a former political prisoner on the island, said he invited all four other candidates, but Sheikh Salman, Prince Ali, and Champagne couldn't find time in their schedules just four days before the election in Zurich.

Infantino and Sheikh Salman have emerged as favorites to succeed Sepp Blatter in the vote forced by the corruption scandal at FIFA. Salman has the backing of Asia, while Infantino has the support of Europe.

Appearing together at a news conference, Infantino and Sexwale called the South African visit symbolic, but the importance of Africa's votes to Infantino's chances was perhaps underlined by his decision to make the last-minute trip. Having received the invitation just a few days ago, the Swiss arrived in South Africa from Geneva on Monday morning, and was making the 13-hour flight back to Switzerland on Monday night.

13th Annual NMC Foundation Open Golf Tournament set for April 30

In its effort to advance post secondary education in the CNMI, the Northern Marianas College Foundation has announced that its signature event, the Annual NMC Foundation Open Golf Tournament, will be held on April 30 on the west course of the Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

This will mark the 13th year of the tournament and falls on NMC's 35th anniversary. It is a pivotal year for the college as it continues its recovery from Typhoon Soudelor, which damaged nearly half of the campus.

The NMC Foundation is composed of community volunteers committed to elevating higher education opportunities for CNMI students. "

"The Northern Marianas College Foundation is excited to announce our 13th Annual NMC Golf Tournament. This year marks a milestone as we join NMC in celebrating 35 years of continued commitment to providing higher education that is accessible to all students within the Commonwealth," says NMC Foundation president Mable Ayuyu.

"We are thankful for the continued support of members in our community, members of our island's golf associations and businesses," Ayuyu added.

Funds generated from this event will be used to support the college's various education programs, especially NMC's School of Business.

The entrance fee for the tournament is only $100 per player. Interested players are also invited to bring their family, friends, and playing partners for a fantastic day of fun and fundraising for a good cause. There will be six flight categories: Championship, A, B, C, Seniors, and Ladies.

Companies or individuals who are interested in sponsoring the event, or who may be interested in registering to play can contact the Northern Marianas College at 237-6780 or email Foundation director James Glenn at james.glenn@marianas.edu for more information.

Registration forms are also available at Laolao Golf Resort and at the NMC Cashier (Building N: hours of operation from 9am to4pm), where payments for the registration fee can be made, as well. ***(NMC)***

KOBEE

From Page 28

season in one word. There's so much that was new to me. From bus rides to away games to the type of players I faced to the uniforms and gear we get to wear just for being part of the program. I feel like the entire season was just a big experience to cherish and learn from," he added.

The perennial MVP of various youth leagues on Saipan averaged 7.5 points, 2.3 assists, and 1.3 steals per game with Thomas Jefferson, which is under the South Puget Sound League, a high-school sports league in Washington's West Central District.

He scored a season-high 25 points in their 63-60 victory against Decatur, but Mendoza selected his game versus Todd Beamer High as his best.

"I scored 13 straight points in the fourth against Todd Beamer High. It felt like I carried my team in both games," said Mendoza, who led Thomas Jefferson's 62-57 come-from-behind win against Todd Beamer High.

But more than his notable personal statistics, Mendoza appreciates the tough love he experienced at Thomas Jefferson to become a better player.

"The biggest lesson I've learned is to be tough. You got to be tough to take critiques from teammates and coaches. You got to be tough to be accountable. You need to be willing to be uncomfortable to get better," said the son of former CNMI Men's National Team player Edsel Mendoza.

With his short stint with the Raiders now over, the younger Mendoza's next move is to shop for colleges.

"I'm talking to a number of junior colleges in the Northwest. In fact, I have a visit to Wenatchee Valley College this weekend."

LENNOSUKE

From Page 28

rio (34.02) and fellow SSC swimmers Rintaro Miyawaki (36.42) and Akira Kadokura (40.35). The 12-year-old SSC member surpassed his old personal best time (29.26), too, while Batallones, Tenorio, and Miyawaki had the same feats as their previous PBTs read at 33.08 seconds, 34.02, and 36.42, respectively.

With Suzuki ruling the boys 11 to 12's 50m freestyle, he got the final 9 points he needed to cap his domination in the division as he also topped the four other events in his age group.

In the 50m butterfly, Suzuki timed in at 33.59 seconds to set a new PBT (old PBT was 35.35 seconds) and prevail against Batallones (34.26), Tenorio (36.51), Miyawaki (43.80), and Kadokura (53.35).

Suzuki got another PBT in the 50m backstroke after submitting 35.96 seconds (from 39.08) and also downed the same batch of foes. Tenorio this time placed second behind Suzuki as the former clocked a PBT of 38.01 second (from 40.04), while Batallones (PBT of 38.96), Miyawaki (PBT of 47.93) and Kadokura (PBT of 54.65) finished third to fifth.

In the 50m breaststroke, Suzuki broke the 40-second barrier after posting 39.38 seconds, which is faster than his previous PBT (40.65). He was the lone swimmer in his division to time in under 40 seconds, as Batallones registered 47.87 seconds, Miyawaki logged 48.78, and Tenorio and Kadokura tallied 48.95 and 49.92, respectively.

Suzuki went on to earn 5-for-5 PBT in the weekend meet, as his 2:43.50 in 200m individual medley shattered his old PBT of 2:47.11. Again, Suzuki completed the race ahead of Tenorio (2:58.13), Batallones (2:59.50), Miyawaki (3:36.01) and Kadokura (4:04.99). He finished the competition with 45 points, 12 more than runner-up Batallones, who collected 33. Tenorio had 31 markers to round out the Top 3. Miyawaki (26) placed fourth and was followed by Kadokura (20) and another SSC swimmer Matthew Zedde (3).

Meanwhile, rankings and results in other age groups will be reported later this week.

FATHERS

From Page 28

smoking in the second for a 6-1 victory. The father and son tandem then kept its momentum in the deciding third set, 6-4, to complete the come-from-behind win.

In the men's 4.0 doubles finals, the Ramseys duplicated the Steeles' feat as the former also took three sets to win against Donn Dunlop and Nicky Nichols. Gary and Colin prevailed in the opening set, 6-4, but missed a sweep when Dunlop and Nichols fought back in the second with a 6-3 victory. In the winner-take-all third set, the Ramseys regained their bearings and posted a 6-2 win.

Meanwhile, coaches prevailed in the men's Open doubles, while two returning players had a winning comeback, and the Kaga siblings—Conatsu and Coume—lorded it over against their fellow youth players.

CNMI coach Jeff Race teamed up with Saipan Tennis Academy mentor Peter Loken in ruling the men's Open doubles division. They never relinquished a set against their foes, sweeping Dunlop and Raj Rai in the semis first, 6-2, 6-0, before dominating Moris Villanueva and Dong Min Lee in the finals in similar scores.

Dunlop arranged a semis showdown opposite Race and Loken after eliminating Steven Goodwin and Vincent Tudela, 6-4, 7-4, while Lee and Villanueva made it to the finals following a 1-6, 7-5, 10-7 victory versus Robbie Schorr and Tony Kim.

In the women's Open doubles, Mikayla Lopez and Negahr Rastguiy, who missed this month's 2016 White Coconut Classic, beat Carol Lee and Wendi Herring in the finals, 6-1, 6-3. The eventual champions marched into the finals after a 6-1, 7-6 win against Malika Miyawaki and Mimi Sakano, who advanced following a 7-6, 6-2 triumph over Marivic Rosario and Sally Lee at the upper half of the draw. At the lower half, Carol and Herring bagged the finals berth after ousting the mother and daughter tandem of Lydia and Tania Tan, 6-4, 6-1.

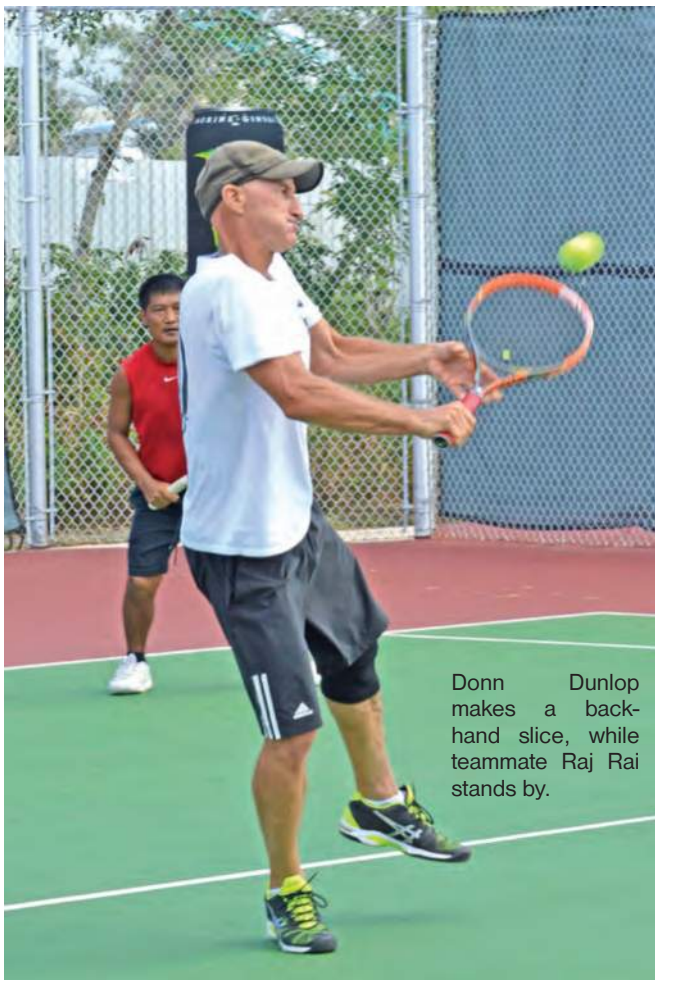
In the women's 3.0 doubles, the Kaga sisters topped the round-robin contest after shutting down Elly Lee and Miae Yoo and Riko Ojima and Maaya Sato.

16th PIC Tennis Championships Week 1

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Anthony Gregoire gets ready to serve against Richard Steele during their quarterfinal game in the boys U12 singles event of the 16th PIC Tennis Championships last weekend at the Pacific Islands Club courts.

Vincent Tudela serves during his and Steven Goodwin's men's Open doubles game against Donn Dunlop and Raj Rai.



Donn Dunlop makes a backhand slice, while teammate Raj Rai stands by.

Vincent Tudela, right, reacts after losing a point, while teammate Steven Goodwin checks on their opponents.

Malika Miyawaki goes for a backhand return to Conatsu Kaga.

Conatsu Kaga sides step for a return to Malika Miyawaki in the girls U14 singles finals.

Daniel Kang is set for a backhand shot against Ji Min Woo.

Steven Goodwin makes a forehand return.

Curry leads Warriors to 50th win, 102-92 over Hawks

PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Pacquiao and Bradley's third bout under a cloud

PAGE 25

Lennosuke breaks 22-year-old record

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Saipan Swim Club's Lennosuke Suzuki does the butterfly stroke of the 200m individual medley event in last Saturday's SSC Pentathlon Meet at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan Swim Club's Lennosuke Suzuki crushed the more than two-decade old age group mark in the 50m freestyle after clocking in at 28.13 seconds in the same event during the 2016 SSC Pentathlon Meet held last Saturday at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

"He broke the 22-year-old record in the 11 to 12 boys 50 freestyle. The previous record belonged to Joshua Taitano who is a good friend and former teammate of mine. Congratulations Len," SSC head coach Jacoby Winkfield said.

Winkfield is talking of the 28.16 seconds Taitano registered on May 6, 1994.

Suzuki's time was also the fastest in his division, as he defeated Tsunami Saipan's Nelson Batallones (32.31 seconds) and Juhn Teno-

See LENNOSUKE on Page 26

Fathers and sons lead doubles winners in PIC tourney

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Richard Steele, seen here returning a shot to Anthony Gregoire in their boys U12 singles match in the 16th PIC Tennis Championships last Saturday at the PIC courts, teamed up with his father Randy to win the men's 3.0 doubles title.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The father and son pairs of Randy and Richard Steele and Gary and Colin Ramsey were among the doubles winners in the opening week of the 16th PIC Tennis Championships.

The Steeles took the men's 3.0 doubles championship after surviving Pacific Islands Club's Keoni Ichihara and June Keller in a three-set finale last Friday at the PIC courts. Randy and Richard dropped the first set, 5-7, but remained in contention after coming out

See FATHERS on Page 26

Kobee completes season, eyes collegiate ball

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Former CNMI Youth National Team member Kobee Mendoza is done with high school basketball and is hoping to play in the collegiate level.

Mendoza suited up for Thomas Jefferson High School last Feb. 12 and helped the Raiders finish second in the conference with its 5-3 record and 11-13 mark overall. Mendoza and his team placed runner-up to the No. 1 squad in the state—Federal Way—in the Northwest Conference. Federal Way had an unblemished 8-0 mark in the conference and 25-0 overall, while Todd Beamer (5-3), Mt. Rainier (2-6) and Decatur (0-8) completed the group.

"Our season ended two games into the playoffs as we lost to Yelm, 60-66, " Mendoza said in his message to *Saipan Tribune* last Monday.

Despite dropping their last match and missing the playoffs, Mendoza is happy with his lone season with the Raiders.

"I'm just happy I played at TJ for my final year of high school basketball. The support I get from everyone at the school is amazing. The teachers came out to the games, all the students came and watched us, we have like the best student section. Even the alumni came down to support us," the former Marianas High School standout said.

"It's hard to describe the

See KOBEE on Page 26

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Thomas Jefferson's Kobee Mendoza goes for an isolation play against a Bethel defender during their game in the South Puget Sound League in Washington.